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ABSTRACT

Papers on library material acquisition, collection development, and exchange programs, which were presented at the 1985 International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) conference, include: (1) "International Collaboration among Acquisition Librarians: Obstacles and Opportunities" (Charles Willett, University of Florida Libraries, United States); (2) "The Library of Congress Non-Official Exchanges" (Peter H. Bridge, Library of Congress, United States); (3) "The Library of Congress/U.S. Government Printing Office International Exchange Program" (Bernadine Abbott Hoduski, U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Printing, United States); (4) "De-Acquisition in University Libraries" (Per Morten Bryhn, Royal University Library, Norway); and (5) "Collaborative Collection Development: Progress, Problems, and Potential" (David H. Stam, The New York Public Library, United States). (THC)

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International Collaboration among Acquisition Librarians: Obstacles and Opportunities

by

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INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION AMONG ACQUISITION LIBRARIANS: OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

by

Charles Willett

Abstract:

Several kinds of cooperative acquisition projects exist in the United States. The nationwide resource sharing program and Conspectus of the Research Libraries Group is described. Other nationwide projects include the Center for Research Libraries, the Seminar for the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, and two projects organized on the independent initiative of a small group of Africana librarians.

International cooperative acquisition projects are possible. A wide range of published and unpublished materials are needed internationally for research and study. Acquisitions librarians in cooperative projects have a responsibility to be aware of these materials, rejecting those which would cause unnecessary duplication and acquiring those which fill in gaps. They also must go beyond published materials and seek out "grey" literature.

The author proposes that a working group, reporting to IFLA's Acquisition and Exchange Section, examine international acquisition problems and prepare guidelines for acceptable performance in purchasing and supplying materials.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION AMONG ACQUISITION LIBRARIANS: OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

by

Charles Willett, University of Florida Libraries

May, 1985

We are at the threshold of international cooperation in acquisitions. No single institution can acquire all the information it needs. [1.] No single government can acquire all the information it needs. Information knows no boundaries. It grows everywhere. Each year there is more and more of it, and yet the demand grows faster than the supply.

Publishers harvest expensive information, and dealers take it to market, but most people cannot afford it. Other information is harvested inexpensively by governments, universities, corporations and other organizations, but no one takes it to market, and most people cannot find it. A great deal of information is not harvested at all. It remains unnoticed until someone stumbles on it by chance, or it bursts forth like an explosion heard around the world.

The first part of my talk today will deal with cooperative efforts to acquire information in the United States. The second part will consider international cooperation.

The affluence of university libraries in the United States in the 1950s and '60s is past. In the changed economic climate of the 1970s and '80s, many university libraries have retreated into an isolationism of English-language, commercial publications which circulate established Western scholarship among established Western scholars. Reviewing a recent book on foreign materials, Charles Osburn wrote in 1983:

> It is timely to have our attention drawn again to the matter of foreign acquisition, because academic librarians now find themselves in a paradoxical situation with no good direction coming either from their parent institution or from national organizations. For a variety of reasons discussed in this book, the acquisitions focus has narrowed steadily for the past dozen years on the domestic publishing industry. While some rationale behind this may be seen in the grossly diminished foreign language skills of our local academic communities, this trend is overshadowed by the rapidly broadening and intensifying concern about events around the globe in most fields. The only thing that is clear at this time is that we are faced with a great dilemma in the planning of acquisition programs for foreign materials. [2.]

The situation is analagous to the 1930s. Recalling American foreign acquisition policies of that period, Verner Clapp said in 1951:

> We found, at the beginning of World War II, that we were all being "realistic"; that we were all, within our capacities, acquiring the same "important" materials, that no one was getting the less "important," and that we were not only the poorer, but dangerously poorer, as a result.[3.]

By relying on the American publishing industry and its English-speaking neighbors in Canada and Western Europe, we exclude, of course, nonconventional literature. Librarians in the United Kingdom have been alert in calling attention to the masses of this "grey" material, which is proliferating all over the world, especially in the social sciences. Very little nonconventional literature finds its way into many of our research libraries, because our acquisition programs rely on commercial sources.

Not only do we exclude non-English, non-Western, and noncommercial materials from our research collections, we also exclude most retrospective titles not already acquired. We cannot justify buying older materials when we cannot afford all the current materials we need.

A number of nationwide cooperative acquisition projects deal with these problems. The largest and most unusual is the Research Libraries Group. RLG was founded in 1974 as an exclusive association of four of the largest libraries in the United States.[5.] In recent years it has broadened its base and now has over 30 full members and 25 associate and special members. Its total acquisition expenditures in 1984 exceeded $68 million.

One of RLG's major efforts in the past few years has been to build the RLG Conspectus.[6.] The Conspectus is a list of about 5,000 subject fields derived from the LC classification scheme. Each library assigns a value from 0 to 5 (nothing to everything) to show its holdings in each subject field and another value to show the level of its current buying. These values are modified by language codes and fed into a special database.

When the system is complete, any member library will be able to compare on-line the level of its holdings and the level of its current buying with those of all other members, for each of the 5,000 subject fields. The design of the Conspectus is nearly complete, and 80 percent of the member collections have been assessed. The Library of Congress has contributed data to the Conspectus, and the Association of Research Libraries has adopted it for its National Collections Inventory Program.

RLG members share a commonly owned bibliographic database. In interlibrary lending, RLG members give each other priority service. Thus the foundation is laid for resource sharing on a large scale. It is not yet evident, however, whether RLG members are actually depriving themselves of needed research materials. One RLG collection development officer feels that cost reduction has been modest and that members are reluctant to give up their autonomy by relying on other members for important materials.[7.]

There has been a recent European proposal to use the RLG Conspectus in a non-governmental organization to be called the European Council of Research Libraries. The proposal calls for linking the databases of American and European research libraries in an intercontinental, cooperative system.[8.]

Another large-scale, cooperative venture among American libraries is the Center for Research Libraries here in Chicago. CRL is a non-profit organization owned by its member libraries. Founded in 1949 by 10 mid-western universities, it now has over 100 full members and over 60 associate members in the United States and Canada.

CRL stores and makes available to its members more than 3 million volumes of little-used research materials, much of it on microform. Some of the materials were deposited by member libraries; others were acquired by purchase, gift, or on exchange.

CRL also administers four foreign microform projects for African, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Latin American materials. Unlike cooperative arrangements in which individual libraries own and control materials, these projects cooperatively acquire materials to be shared jointly. Selection decisions draw on the expertise of all the members, and projects are less likely to be influenced by local priorities than efforts by individual libraries.[9.]

Another example of cooperative acquisitions in the United States is SALALM, the Seminar for the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials. SALALM was founded in 1956 on the initiative of the University of Florida. The first meeting brought together librarians and book dealers who wrote working documents on acquiring Latin American books, periodicals, maps, government publications, microfilms and other materials. The two-day meeting, attended by 26 participants and six observers, has become an annual event.[10.]

From 1960 to about 1970, SALALM supported LACAP, the Latin American Cooperative Acquisition Project, operated by the firm Stechert-Hafner, the New York Public Library, and the University of Texas at Austin. Under LACAP, Stechert-Hafner serviced blanket orders and issued catalogs of available titles. By its example, LACAP encouraged many other Latin American dealers to export books and periodicals to the United States.[11.]

SALALM members have compiled voluminous bibliographies. Meetings are a forum for the exchange of information about specific acquisition problems and about publishers, dealers, and titles in each country and region. Meetings also discuss the acquisition of non-trade materials, which must be acquired directly from universities, government agencies, and private corporations.[12.]

Africana presents a different case. For more than 20 years, the Archives-Libraries Committee of the African Studies Association has linked African studies librarians in the United States and has acted as a clearing-house for information about the acquisition of Africana. After the budget cuts of the 1970s, a few members of this committee decided to develop cooperative acquisition projects, using only their own limited resources.[13.]

Their first project concerned newspapers. A list was made of 15 African newspapers from six countries which were considered essential for research. Seven U.S. libraries agreed to maintain their subscriptions to one or more of these titles, to report the issues received, and to retain the issues until they had been microfilmed.

The second project concerned the publications of 15 African countries with little book production. Acquiring materials from these areas is difficult and labor intensive. Eight libraries agreed to collect comprehensively the publications from at least one of these countries, to report promptly all titles received in the Joint Acquisitions List of Africana, and to make all items available through interlibrary loan.

Together, the two projects involve 10 institutions. Formal agreements were drafted, discussed, and signed in 1982. A formal evaluation is scheduled for 1985.[14.] Accountability of each participant has been stressed as an important ingredient of cooperation.[15.]

These organizations illustrate different techniques for organizing cooperative acquisition projects. The Center for Research Libraries is a warehouse and lending library. SALALM is a clearinghouse for information about Latin American materials. In the Africana projects, 10 university libraries agreed to acquire certain specific materials in a certain amount of time. In theory, each library buys 10 percent of the total, using money saved by buying none of the remaining 90 percent.

The authors of the African project make an interesting distinction between two kinds of cooperative acquisition which at first seem opposed. On the one hand, we try to avoid duplicating our strengths. On the other, we try to overcome our weaknesses. In the first case, our goal is to economize by not buying materials already available elsewhere. In the second, our goal is to fill gaps of hard-to-get items. These two views are not really opposed, as the authors point out: money saved from the first kind of cooperation can be used to pursue the second. The examples of CRL, SALALM, and the African projects illustrate these three types.[16.]

Turning to the international area, I am less sure of my ground. I have no experience in libraries in other countries. I cannot assume that university libraries there are similar to those in the United States, or that they are developing along parallel lines. And yet, when I read articles by librarians from other countries, it is clear that we are all colleagues in the same profession, all working toward the same goals.

I assume that automation is coming to our libraries, coming very soon for many of us. I assume also that increasing automation will bring increasing international communication and cooperation among librarians. And I also assume that shared automation will require standard policies and procedures. As noted earlier, plans are already being discussed to link North American and European bibliographic databases. Some Third World countries already have the information technology to join the transatlantic system, and others are getting it. Still others, however, will probably have to continue to depend on printed bibliographies for some time.[17.]

We are at the threshold of international cooperation in acquisitions. Information and the demand for it are growing rapidly in all countries. IFLA's programs for UAP and UBC seek to make that information available for use. Before information can be shared, materials must be acquired. What materials? Who will acquire them? What methods will be used? These are questions for acquisitions librarians from all countries to consider.

What are the characteristics of the materials needed by the international academic community? At the top of the list are new scholarly books and periodicals published primarily in North America and Western Europe by commercial publishers and major university presses. They are in great demand all over the world. Their manufacture and distribution are well financed and publicized. They are expensive. Average costs approach $50 for hardbound scholarly books and $100 for journals. Print runs for monographs are much shorter. Some titles go out of print in less than two years, are declared "out of stock," and are not reprinted. It has been estimated that there were about 50,000 scientific journals in the Western world in 1950, 75,000 in 1970, and probably more than 100,000 today.[18.]

Second, there are published materials in special formats: maps, art books, musical scores, microforms, films, videotapes, recordings, digital data tapes, and others. These are produced commercially, but adequate publicity and distribution may be lacking. They are expensive.

A third category includes belles lettres and scholarly materials published by smaller and foreign language presses throughout the world. They may not be expensive, but they are often difficult to acquire.

Fourth are primary materials issued by national and international government agencies, universities, scholarly societies and associations, and research institutes. These documents, maps, exhibition catalogs, technical reports, conference proceedings, statistics, dissertations, theses, translations, house journals, and working papers are essential for research. Some of these materials are published commercially in expensive hard copy or microform. Some are distributed at low cost by government printing offices. Others are available in photocopy or microform at a high price "on demand." Others are privately printed and circulated within the organization. Still others are not printed at all, but are mimeographed or photocopied in only a few copies, stapled together, and handed out. A study of the proceedings of 143 conferences in the Middle East showed that 40, or 28 percent, remained unpublished.[19.]

A fifth category consists of primary materials from other, less prominent organizations: local governments and societies, businesses, banks, farmer cooperatives, employer organizations, trade unions, political parties, student organizations, extremist groups, special interest groups, and the like. These inexpensive materials are even less likely to be published and distributed effectively, or to be collected by libraries. Researchers often have great difficulty obtaining them.[20.]

Finally, comprehensive collections of current or retrospective materials on many subjects may be of interest. The Center for Research Libraries, for example, holds special collections of children's literature, belles lettres, folklore, textbooks, popular magazines and comic books, dime novels, political and satirical cartoons, revolutionary pamphlets, materials from the underground press, the women's liberation movement, and the homosexual rights movement, and the personal papers and scrapbooks of prominent individuals.

These, then, are six categories of materials needed for academic libraries. Who is going to get them? The answer to that question is -- we are. We acquisitions librarians, serials librarians, book selectors, and bibliographers are responsible. And we need to do a better job. We have a tendency to sit passively in our offices and wait for the automatic shipments and the publishers' advertisements to arrive. We also have a tendency to become preoccupied with internal matters, to forget that our responsibilities are mainly outside the library.

We acquisitions librarians have two main functions. As described earlier in relation to the Africana projects, we have a responsibility to our institutions to be as economical as possible, to avoid unnecessary duplication in areas where we are strong. We also have a responsibility to our readers to fill gaps in areas where we are weak.

Materials, as we have seen, occur along a continuum from very well known, published works to very obscure, "grey" literature. In the first case, we act as our readers' agents, making sure they get the quality, quantity, price, speed, and service they need.[21.]

We should also act as defenders of publishers and dealers when necessary. They play a vital role which is not always understood by our readers, or by government agencies. In African countries where local publishers and dealers have great financial and bureaucratic difficulties, librarians from African and other countries might act as intermediaries with local officials.[22.]

Publishers and dealers, of course, only handle material they can readily sell. What they cannot sell -- grey literature -- they ignore. But that does not mean we can ignore it! We have to go out and hunt for grey literature and capture it and bring it back alive! Specifically, we have to get the originators of grey materials to make the documents known

and available. And we have to get the documentation services to widen their coverage, to improve bibliographic control of these materials, and to assist in their acquisition.[23.] This is something we can all do in our own countries.

Two international organizations have already established cooperative procedures for nonconventional materials. The Food and Agriculture Organization's information system AGRIS has been documenting these materials for 10 years. The International Atomic Energy Agency is now performing a similar service through its global information service INIS. In the AGRIS system each country, using its own local staff, identifies and reports new information originating on its territory. In exchange for this service, it receives a free copy of the AGRIS international database, updated monthly. It has been suggested that other, similar programs, which do not require governmental participation, could be established for other areas.[24.]

While preparing this talk, I found an article by a librarian and a professor at a Nigerian university who are looking at the same problems I face from the other side. I have difficulty getting materials from Africa. They have difficulty getting materials from North America.[25.]

Isn't there some way acquisitions librarians in different countries can help each other? Can we organize through IFLA a formal or informal working group, reporting to the Acquisition and Exchange Section, which would examine specific international acquisition problems and seek solutions? There is a real need to gather information, to study relationships between publishers, dealers, governmental agencies, and libraries, and to prepare guidelines for acceptable performance in purchasing and supplying materials.

IFLA is the right place for such a working group. The 1985 conference, concerned with "Libraries and the Universal Availability of Information," is the right time. We acquisitions librarians are the right people. It is our job to act as agents for our readers, to deal with commercial and governmental agencies, to establish communications between our authors and our readers. Shall we sit passively, while others place unreasonable financial and bureaucratic obstacles in the path? Or shall we collaborate to remove the obstacles and create opportunities for better international understanding?

In Kafka's novel The Trial there is a parable about a man who came from the country to enter the Law. When he arrived, the door to the Law was open. Beside the door stood a doorkeeper, who told the man: "You can't go in now; maybe later."

The man tried to look inside. The doorkeeper laughed. "If it is so tempting," he said, "try to go in without my permission. But remember, I am very strong, and inside there are many other doorkeepers even stronger than I."

The man from the country decided to wait for permission. The doorkeeper brought him a chair. He waited day after day after day. He gave the doorkeeper all his possessions. But no matter how he tried, he was never permitted to enter the Law.

The man spent his whole life sitting outside that door. He grew old and the time came for him to die. He beckoned to the doorkeeper and whispered one final question in his ear. "Tell me," said the man, "in all these years, why has no one else ever tried to enter here?"

The doorkeeper shouted back so the man could hear: "Because this door was reserved for you. Now I am going to shut it."

As we seek international cooperation, we acquisitions librarians are like the man from the country. We are not well informed, we are isolated from each other, our budgets are limited, we have little power, and we are accustomed to follow instructions.

The obstacles to cooperation seem enormous. We are separated by great distances, by cultural and language barriers, and by political differences. We belong to separate national library systems. And we are dependent on skillful international book dealers, whose companies have all the things we lack: information, organization, money, power, and the imagination to experiment with new methods.

That is the status quo, which has existed for many years. This talk has tried to show that we can change the status quo by entering international cooperation, turning our weaknesses into strengths and our obstacles into opportunities.

1. Even Harvard's needs are greater than the funds available, reports Sally F. Williams in "Budget Justification: Closing the Gap between Request and Result," Library Resources and Technical Services 28 (1984): 129 - 135.

2. Charles B. Osburn, in the Journal of Academic Librarianship, May 1983, p. 95, reviewing Acquisition of Foreign Materials for U.S. Libraries, 2nd ed., compiled and edited by Theodore Samore, Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1982.

3. From a speech quoted in Edwin E. Williams, The Farmington Plan Handbook, Bloomington, IN: Association of Research Libraries, 1953, p. 36.

4. See Aslib Proceedings, 34 (11/12), (Nov/Dec 1982), for several papers presented at a conference on nonconventional literature in May 1982, especially Steven Vickers, "Grey Literature Worldwide: the UAP Programme," pp. 498 - 505.

5. See Douglas W. Bryant's talk of 21 March 1974, reported in Harvard Library Bulletin XXII (1974): 365 - 373, for his motivation in helping to found RLG. Harvard withdrew from RLG in 1978.

6. An excellent article on the Conspectus by Nancy E. Gwinn and Paul H. Mosher, "Coordinating Collection Development: the RLG Conspectus," appeared in College & Research Libraries 44 (1983): 128 - 140.

7. Scott Bennett, in "Current Initiatives and Issues in Collection Management," JAL 10 (1984): 257 - 261, examines the extent to which cooperative activities are actually taking place.

8. IFLA Journal 11 (1985) 1: 62 - 63.

9. Ray Boylan and Cecilia L. Shores,"Collecting Retrospective Materials from Developing Nations: A Cooperative Approach through Microforms," Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory 6 (1982): 211 - 219.

10. For an early history of SALALM, see Marietta Daniels Shepard, "Cooperative Acquisitions of Latin American Materials," LRTS 13 (1969): 347 - 360. Current information is given in Basic Documents of the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, Inc. 3rd ed., rev., SALALM Secretariat, Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1981.

11. An entertaining history of LACAP and its travelling agents is M.J. Savary, The Latin American Cooperative Acquisitions Program ... An Imaginative Venture, New York, Hafner Publishing, 1968.

13. Maidel Cason, David L. Easterbrook, and Yvette Scheven, "Cooperative Acquisition of Africana: Past Performance and Future Direction," LAPT 6 (1982): 221 - 231.

12. Laura Gutierrez-Witt and Donald L. Gibbs, "Acquiring Latin American Books," LAPT 6 (1982): 167 - 176.

14. From a paper delivered by David L. Easterbrook,"Africana Collections in the 1980s: A Reemergence of Cooperative Acquisitions," at the Third National Conference of the Association of College and Research Libraries, Seattle, WA, April 4-7, 1984.

15. At the Third ACRL Conference, Maidel Cason presented the paper, "Accountability in Cooperative Collection Development: The Elusive Ingredient." She emphasizes that cooperative acquisitions projects will be successful only if each institution is accountable to the group.

16. Cason, Easterbrook, and Scheven, "Cooperative Acquisition of Africana."

17. Recent articles on this subject include:
Dorothy Anderson, "Waiting for Technology: An Overview of Bibliographic Services in the Third World," IFLA Journal 9 (1983) 4: 285 - 295 .
Thomas P. McGinn, "The Automation of Technical Services in Venezuela's National Library: Aspects of a Transfer of Library Technology," LRTS 26 (1982): 170 - 176.
Peter Moll, "Should the Third World Have Information Technology?" IFLA Journal 9 (1983) 4: 296 - 308.
Ziauddin Sardar, "Between GIN and TWIN: Meeting the Information Needs of the Third World," Aslib Proceedings 33:2 (Feb 1981): 53 - 61.

18. Charles B. Osburn, "The Place of the Journal in the Scholarly Communications System," LRTS 28 (1984): 315 - 324.

19. Michael W. Albin, "Acquisition of Conference Proceedings from the Arab World," LAPT 6 (1982): 201 - 209.

20. The frustrations of such searches are described by Erwin K. Welsch, "Some Aspects of Acquiring European Social Science Materials," in Acquisition of Foreign Materials for U.S. Libraries, compiled and edited by Theodore Samore, Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1973, pp. 204 - 210.

21. John Reidelbach and Gary M. Shirk, "Selecting an Approval Plan Vendor: A Step by Step Process," LAPT 7 (1983): 115 - 122; also: "Selecting an Approval Plan Vendor II: Comparative Vendor Data," LAPT 8 (1984) 157 - 202.

22. For descriptions of the problems of the African book trade, see: Eva-Maria Rathgeber, "Africana Acquisition Problems: The View from Both Sides," LAPT 6 (1982): 137 - 148; also: Irmtraud-D. Wolcke-Renk, "Acquisition of African Literature: Problems and Challenges for Bookdealer and Librarian," IFLA Journal 10 (1984) 4: 377 - 384.

23. N.W. Posnett, "Factors Affecting the Accessibility of Nonconventional Literature for Use in the United Kingdom and Some Possible Solutions," LAPT 8 (1984): 275 - 285. An excellent description of grey literature.

24. John E. Woolston, "Information Exchange in a North-South Context· Is There More to Gain through Cooperation than in Trying to Establish New Markets?" Aslib Proceedings 36/1 (Jan 1984) 7 - 14.

25. G.T. Onadiran and R.W. Onadiran, "Building Library Collections in University Libraries in Nigeria," C&RL 44 (1983) 358 - 367.

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Division: Collection and Services

Section: ACQUISITION AND EXCHANGE

45-ACQUI-2-E

The Library of Congress Non-Official Exchanges

by

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Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

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Abstract

The Library of Congress Non-Official Exchanges

The non-official exchanges of the Library of Congress, while less widely publicized than the official exchanges, comprise a major component of its acquisitions program. Numbering over 15,000 agreements world-wide, the network of non-official exchanges reaches out to a broad range of semi-official, international, educational, and learned organizations. Informal exchanges with selected agencies of national governments are also included among the non-official exchanges, constituting an important adjunct to the official exchange program. The article traces the history of the non-official exchanges and the principal features of their operations and methodology, as well as their relative position and significance in the Library's acquisitions program as a whole.

A very great deal has been said about the official exchange program of the Library of Congress, but, so far as I am aware, very little about the Library's non-official exchange program. This situation is natural enough, since the official exchange program enjoys the prestige of being supported by multilateral treaties and bilateral executive agreements as well as national legislation to insure the availability of documents for its exclusive use. It is striking, nonetheless, that so little attention has been focused on our non-official exchanges, since they are so numerous (there are about 15,000 of them world-wide) and of such importance in the general framework of the Library's acquisitions activities.

At the Library of Congress, all exchanges -- official, non-official, international, and domestic -- are the responsibility of the Exchange and Gift Division. For the purposes of this presentation I shall confine my remarks to non-official international exchanges. The non-official exchanges embrace that body of informal arrangements establishing the interchange of all types of library materials with the widest variety of semi-official, international, educational, and learned organizations.(1) The Library of Congress also deems to be non-official (although I suppose "quasi-official" might be a more accurate term) informal exchange arrangements with individual agencies of other governments, whether national or provincial, in which selected publications are exchanged on a negotiated basis, and which do not involve the provision of sets of official documents. This latter category of non-official exchanges serves as a supplement, of course, to the official exchanges and is intended to provide for the acquisition of governmental documents which, for various reasons, may not be available through the official exchanges.

Thus, while all of our exchanges are, in the most literal sense 'official', in that the Library of Congress is an agency of the United States Government, we adhere to the widely accepted convention that official exchanges involve the exclusive provision of comprehensive sets of government documents and partake of some degree of formality (i.e., they are based on international agreement), whereas the non-official exchanges do not involve the provision of sets of U.S. Government publications in return for similar sets, and therefore fall into the non-official category, even though such arrangements may include certain official documents. The non-official exchanges as conducted by the Library of Congress thus comprise what Laurence Kipp long ago termed "departmental" and "cultural" exchanges.(2)

As of the end of fiscal year 1984 there were on record some 14,502 exchange agreements, all but 68 of which were non-official. These relationships range from extremely sporadic, low-yield activity to that which is continuous and highly productive. The exchanges involve organizations in virtually every nation of the world, Albania being the only current exception that comes to mind. In fiscal year 1984 alone they yielded the receipt of 295,927 pieces. The growth in the number of these exchanges has been gradual over the years, and subject to the inevitable fluctuations brought on by war and economic conditions.

The exchange program underwent what was probably its most dramatic expansion during the period 1945-1960, when, following the recovery from the Second World War, the rapid increase of publication activities and the general thirst for research materials of all kinds fostered the pursuit of every practicable avenue to fulfill the Library's commitments to the Congress, the Federal Government, the research community, and the general public. During this period

of rapid growth the Library initiated exchanges, often on a purely speculative basis, with virtually any organization whose apparent character suggested that exchange might be possible. Proposals frequently led to no concrete results, or to a level of exchange activity that could be described as desultory at best. It has been our task ever since to review and reappraise the usefulness of all the exchanges on as systematic and regular a basis as available staff and time permit.

As a result, during the secondary or consolidation phase of the post-war years (from 1960 to approximately 1975) the Library began to examine the exchange program more closely, with the object of maintaining it on a more critical basis and making a concerted effort to identify those exchanges which were not productive or were redundant. The number of exchanges peaked in 1964 when the total reached 25,475.(3) They then began to decline gradually, as we undertook a systematic review. Thus, simultaneous with the exploration of new exchange possibilities, which proceeded in a vigorous, if rather more selective manner, the Library eventually reduced the number of exchanges listed as current to approximately one-half of the 1964 peak, arriving by the end of fiscal year 1975 at a total of 12,621 exchange agreements.(4) In recent years there has been a relatively modest growth, with the total number of exchanges hovering around 15,000. Up till now, rather loose criteria have been applied to judge the effectiveness of the exchanges, depending primarily on whether the Library has received materials of research value on a fairly regular basis and approximately in proportion, both in quality and quantity, to what it has sent out. Not much effort has been made, however, to determine whether these exchanges overlap one another — producing duplication — or significantly overlap purchase acquisitions. Since in so many instances the only way to insure that

publications could be received at all was to develop contacts with as many sources as possible, a certain amount of duplication has been regarded as not only inevitable, but even desirable.

At this point we ought to take a brief look at the structure of the exchange operation and how it fits into the Library's acquisitions picture as a whole. To begin with, there is allocated to the Exchange and Gift Division a staff of 18, dedicated exclusively to exchange acquisitions and distributed among 3 exchange sections with specific area assignments: the African-Asian Exchange Section (3 professionals, 3 technicians); the American-British Exchange Section (2 professionals, 3 technicians); and the European Exchange Section (3 professionals, 4 technicians). In addition, there is an Hispanic Acquisitions Section (5 professionals, 1 technician, and 2 clericals) which is responsible for both purchase and exchange acquisitions.

The latter Section was created in order to obtain better coordination of all acquisitions resources in an area (Latin America, Spain and Portugal) which, taken as a whole, is fairly homogeneous culturally and linguistically. This experiment has proved successful and suggests the possibility of emulation in other geographical regions. As the staffing statistics just cited reflect, the combined purchase/non-purchase operation, to be effective, appears to require more professional staff with proportionately higher operational overhead, the price to be paid for full coordination of acquisitions sources and reduction of redundant duplicate receipts.

The combining of purchase and non-purchase acquisitions in a single unit is in no way novel, but this point brings us to another important aspect of the Library's organizational structure, namely that purchase and non-purchase acquisitions have been separately administered for the past 45 years by, respec-

tively, the Order and the Exchange and Gift Divisions. This form of organization was judged the most practicable, despite the inherent problems of coordination it implied, because of the breadth of the Library's acquisitions programs and policies, the extreme elaboration of its non-purchase acquisitions activities, which called for a fairly large staff of specialists dedicated to exchange and gift work, and the desire to bring adequate managerial control over the increasingly specialized activity in both purchase and non-purchase spheres. Collections development responsibilities (i.e., recommending and selection), on the other hand, have been regulated by staff in another department, whose responsibility is not only to coordinate the recommendation process, but also to render advice, as needed, about the most likely acquisition sources to be pursued. Such advice, of course, has always been subject to the approval of the acquisitions divisions, based on their first-hand knowledge of the ongoing relations with various acquisitions sources.(5)

This division of labor has proved quite successful for acquisitions from the developed nations of the world, where very stable relationships could be maintained with institutions, governments, and the book trade. But by 1960 it became clear that coverage was not going to be effective throughout broad tracts of the world where the book trade and various types of organizations were not as highly developed as, for instance, in Western Europe or Japan. Thus there were established, with tremendous positive implications for the Library's acquisitions, a series of offices employing local staff in India, Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia, Kenya, Brazil, and briefly, in Israel and Yugoslavia, under the control of a third acquisitions division, the Overseas Operations Division, whose assignment is to acquire (and now also to catalog) library materials, both by purchase and exchange, directly from their sources in the field.(6) These three

divisions, the Order Division, Exchange and Gift Division, and the Overseas Operations Division, work in tandem under the Office of the Director for Acquisitions and Overseas Operations to acquire all the various types of materials needed by the Library, excluding Copyright deposits which are administered by a separate Department — the Copyright Office.

It is in this general context that the non-official exchanges are conducted. Let us take a brief look at the operational bases of the Library's exchanges. These are quite conventional and include:

> 1) approximate equivalence of research and monetary value, i.e., piece-for-piece, or, in the case of serial publications, subscription-for-subscription. Variants of this approach include foot-for-foot or frame-for-frame for microfilm, fiche-for-fiche for microfiche, etc.
>
> 2) "priced exchange" in which the Library has either agreed to exchange the materials on the basis of their current market value, with the balance being calculated quarterly or, more usually these days, to provide titles as specifically requested by the exchange partner, both commercial and non-commercial, with the reckoning of exchange balance calculated quarterly on the basis of pages supplied. The priced element is not directly stated in such instances, but the Library lumps these exchanges under the rubric of "priced exchanges" for convenience because it must allocate purchase funds specifically to acquire the materials sent on exchange and also because the book keeping practices are similar. "Priced exchanges" are quite limited in number and the Library does not openly encourage them, because they are labor-intensive. Generally, they are resorted to only when more conventional exchanges are not possible, or where the exchange partners insist upon such an arrangement. The latter case occurs most frequently in those instances where there is difficulty in obtaining hard currency for purchasing American publications.
>
> 3) "open exchanges", which are really looser variants of the piece-for-piece exchanges and are applied characteristically to the larger exchanges in which little or no accounting for the monetary value of the pieces or the number exchanged is involved. It is assumed that each partner will supply the other with all of its publications or certain specifically designated ones, and that over a period of time the receipts and sendings will tend to balance. This type of exchange is relatively rare, but closely resembles in its premises the official exchanges.(7)

The Library of Congress has considerable latitude in offering materials for its non-official exchanges. It may draw from its own quite extensive catalog of publications, including the National Union Catalog, selected U.S. Government publications, and selected surplus and duplicate publications. Use of the Library's own publications has remained constant throughout the history of its exchange program, and is limited only by the availability of stock. No specific budget is allocated to secure the copies needed for exchange purposes.

U.S. Federal Government documents are also furnished in the non-official exchanges, but in a much more restricted fashion than in the past. We currently are relying on duplicate copies of Federal publications inasmuch as we receive many discarded copies of almost-current documents, from other Federal agencies as well as various offices within the Library, which are still entirely serviceable. We also have a modest budget to purchase publications from the Superintendent of Documents when the circumstances warrant and the documents are still available. Formerly, U.S. Federal documents were available practically on demand and could be offered with a great degree of assurance, but changes in the Federal laws governing the availability of these publications for exchange, prompted by considerations of economy, have limited their supply to the official exchange sets since October 1982, and thus we are no longer able to guarantee the supply of the majority of Federal documents, except when we have determined that what we receive in return is of equal value and quality.

Since 1970 we have grown ever more reliant on the use of surplus and duplicate materials in our non-official exchanges. Fortunately for the Library, a vast array of surplus and duplicate publications is available, not only as discards from its own holdings, but also as transfers from other Federal agency libraries. These surplus and duplicate materials contain a very large quantity

of current trade publications of research value, including excess Copyright deposit copies and current monographic publications of very high quality. We have been able to utilize these surplus and duplicate materials very effectively. It is no exaggeration to state that their use currently forms the backbone of our non-official exchange program.

An obvious objection to the use of the surplus and duplicate materials is that great amounts of labor are required to select, list and distribute them to exchange partners, and this approach, while time-honored, certainly violates an equally time-honored principle in exchange work: that staff overhead should be kept as low as possible and operational procedures correspondingly simple.(8) At the same time, however, we have found that many of the Library's non-official exchange partners are far more interested in the surplus and duplicate materials, provided they are reasonably current and of good quality, than they are in either the Library's publications or the general run of Federal documents. This is particularly true of educational and research institutions and learned organizations wherever they are geographically located, and of our exchange partners in general in developing nations.

In response to these needs, the Library has developed a technique of offering exchange lists in various subject fields known as "Project Mañana" (so named because it was initiated in the Hispanic Acquisitions Section). "Project Mañana" depends upon a profile of subject interests indicated by exchange partners through a survey which the exchange staff conducts at the time the exchange is initiated. The survey questionnaire (see Appendix) sets forth the subjects for which lists are regularly circulated (the number varies from section to section, but is usually between 30 and 40) and asks that the exchange partner select no more than three subject areas of interest. The institution is then

entered into the mailing list for distribution — usually twice yearly — of the subject lists desired. Each list contains about 200 titles carefully selected from the current surplus stock. The staff makes a particularly conscientious effort to select the best quality of current imprints or older materials deemed to retain significant research value. Naturally, materials of rare or very special character are not included in these lists. Since each section compiles and distributes its own lists, there is considerable rivalry among the sections to secure the best materials for their use, and the privilege of having first choice to select from newly arrived lots of duplicates is, therefore, rotated among them. Because these materials arrive in great quantity (some 3 to 4 million items yearly, of which, perhaps 5 per cent are useful for this purpose) there is always enough material to satisfy the needs of the sections without resort to purchase, although, of course, they must expend considerable care and effort to make their selections.

The exchange partners are invited to make selections from these lists and also to make counteroffers in cases where they are not already regularly sending materials on exchange. After the posted expiration date for each list, the staff reviews the exchange partners' responses and apportions the items selected, giving preference, in cases of multiple requests for the same item, to the order in which the responses arrived as well as the standing of the exchange partner (i.e., the quality and regularity of their sendings to the Library).(9)

Distribution of "Project Mañana" materials has proved extremly successful with a broad range of exchange partners and in every quarter of the world, appealing, on the one hand, to those with highly specialized fields of interest, and on the other, to those with a need for current trade publications in a wide range of fields to serve their general research purposes. It would be

impossible to conduct so extensive an exchange of currently published, high quality duplicates were it not for the vast quantity of these materials that are at all times accessible to the Library. Clearly, we would not find it desirable as an alternative to allocate funds to purchase a comparable quantity of publications for use on exchange, and the program would need to contract correspondingly.

The exchange staff also prepares short tailor-made lists in answer to particular needs of individual exchange partners. This practice is much more limited since it necessarily entails a very high level of labor in proportion to the anticipated returns, and is thus reserved only for exchanges that enjoy preferred status because of their reliability and productivity. Priced exchanges, as generally described above, are also conducted with some 16 organizations, mainly in the Soviet Union and in Central Europe. In these arrangements the Library attempts to secure titles on demand and allocates funds necessary to support purchases of these materials. On rare occasion, the staff will also recommend purchase of items specially requested by a non-priced exchange partner, but not available from the duplicates. These cases are also limited to exchanges enjoying preferred status. The annual budget for all exchange purchases has now reached $130,000, and must necessarily remain limited.

As to basic operations, the exchange program typically relies almost entirely on correspondence to conduct its business, sending out on average over 30,000 letters each year. Whenever possible, the Library uses form letters in a variety of languages for routine communications (requests, acknowledgments, etc.). Less routine letters, answering specific inquiries about particular exchanges or discussing points of policy, are specially drafted, normally in English, by the professional staff. About 4,000 such letters are sent each

year. The Hispanic Acquisitions Section, on the other hand, corresponds almost entirely in Spanish or Portuguese, as the case warrants, since all of its staff are required to have writing fluency in one or the other of the two principal languages of their area of responsibility.

To sum up, then, the Library of Congress maintains a very extensive worldwide network of informal, non-official exchanges and is able to maintain them with relatively low staff overhead through the use of a combination of its own publications and surplus and duplicate materials. These arrangements function as a whole very smoothly with exchange partners in Europe, the English-speaking world, and certain very advanced nations in other areas, for example, Japan. They require greater effort to maintain in less developed areas, although there is frequently no more economical alternative for acquisitions. Where the Library of Congress has been fortunate enough to establish overseas offices, direct contact with the exchange partners has greatly increased the success and productivity of exchange arrangements that would otherwise be next to impossible to carry on from Washington. The employment of contract agents in other areas where offices are not feasible, and the dispatch of acquisitions staff and area specialists on periodic field trips supplement the regular, ongoing programs, but are limited by shortage of funds.

The non-official exchanges remain a viable and productive means of acquisitions, indeed, in many instances, the only means by which the Library of Congress can obtain publications which lie outside the regular book trade. The program could, nevertheless, benefit from further effort to eliminate overlap between exchange sources which duplicate each other's sendings, reduce or cancel exchanges which are not truly productive, and improve coordination of all acquisitions resources available to the Library, purchase and non-purchase alike.

The pursuit of these remedies will occupy the exchange staff during the next few years and will involve continued systematic review, increased use of automation, and probable reduction of the number of exchange agreements. Reorganization of certain areas of the entire acquisitions program is also likely. We consider our non-official exchange program highly successful, having proved its value over the years, and I believe it will continue to play a major role in the Library's total acquisitions efforts.

REFERENCES

(1) Nathan R. Einhorn, "Exchange of Publications." In Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, v. 8, p. 283. cf. also Laurence J. Kipp, The International Exchange of Publications. Wakefield, Mass., (ca. 1950), p. 7.

(2) Kipp, op. cit., p. 7 and pp. 17-18.

(3) U.S. Library of Congress. Exchange and Gift Division. Annual Report for the Year Ending June 30, 1964. [Washington, 1964] p. 2.

(4) U.S. Library of Congress. Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Year Ending June 30, 1975. Washington 1976. p. 18.

(5) For an account of historical background and rationale underlying this organizational structure, see U.S. Library of Congress. Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Year Ended June 30, 1944. pp. 13-17.

(6) A pilot project was established in 1961 using counterpart funds made available through the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 83-480), in which offices were created in India, Pakistan and Egypt. See U.S. Library of Congress. Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1962. Washington, 1963, p. XV.

(7) cf. Einhorn, op. cit., p. 286.

(8) cf. Maurice F. Tauber, Technical Services in Libraries. New York, Columbia Univ. Pr. [1953] p. 97 ff.

(9) cf. UNESCO, Handbook on the International Exchange of Publications, 4th ed. [Paris, 1978] p. 98 ff.

APPENDIX

EXCHANGE OF PUBLICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate the subject areas of interest to your institution (no more than three):
Indiquéz s'il vous plaît les sujets de interêt à votre institution (pas plus que trois):

- ○ AGRICULTURE
  Soils, Farm Machinery and Engineering, Conservation, Plant Culture, Forestry, Animal Culture, Aquaculture, Hunting, etc.
- ○ AREA STUDIES - COUNTRY STUDIES
  American University Country Studies - Area Studies
- ○ ANTHROPOLOGY
- ○ AUXILIARY SCIENCES OF HISTORY
  Archaeology, History of Civilization and Culture, Heraldry, Genealogy, Biography
- ○ BIBLIOGRAPHY - LIBRARY SCIENCE
  Dictionaries, Reference Works, etc.
- ○ COMMUNICATION
  Radio, Television, Telephone, Printing, Journalism, etc.
- ○ ECONOMICS
  Finance, Money and Banking, Statistics, Corporation Finance, etc.
- ○ EDUCATION
- ○ FINE ARTS
  Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Decorative Arts, Interior Design
- ○ GEOGRAPHY
- ○ HISTORY : AMERICA
  North America, Latin America United States
- ○ HISTORY : GENERAL AND OLD WORLD
  Ancient History, Medieval History, Modern History, Histories by Various Countries in Europe, Mediterranean Region, Northern Europe, Eastern Europe, Great Britain, Asia, Africa, Oceania, Middle East, etc.
- ○ JUDAICA
- ○ LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
  English Literature, American Literature, Fiction in English, Juvenile Literature, World Literature
- ○ LAW
- ○ LINGUISTICS
- ○ MATHEMATICS
- ○ MEDICINE
- ○ MUSIC AND BOOKS ON MUSIC
  Literature of Music, Biographies of Individual Composers, etc.
- ○ PERFORMING ARTS
  Theatre, Drama, Opera, Dance, etc.
- ○ PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY, RELIGION
- ○ POLITICAL SCIENCE
- ○ RECREATION
  Sports, Physical Education, Outdoor Life, Chess, Games and Amusements, etc.
- ○ SCIENCE
  Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Zoology, Human Anatomy, Physiology, Microbiology, Psychiatry, etc.
- ○ SOCIAL STUDIES
  Demography, Family Planning, Women, Labor, etc.
- ○ SOCIOLOGY
- ○ TECHNOLOGY (A)
  Industrial Engineering, Engineering (General), Environmental Engineering, Building Construction, etc.
- ○ TECHNOLOGY (B)
  Chemical and Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Photography, Production Management, Quality Control, Packaging, Plant Engineering, Home Economics, etc.
- ○ TECHNOLOGY (C)
  Traffic Engineering, Water Transportation, Automotive Transportation, Highway Engineering, Aviation, Railroads, Rapid Transit Systems, etc.
- ○ OTHER (Please Specify)

_____

_____

PLEASE GIVE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS BELOW:

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE RETURN QUESTIONNAIRE TO:

Library of Congress
Exchange and Gift Division
Washington, D. C. 20540
U. S. A.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IFLA

1985

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, CHICAGO

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Acquisition and Exchange

115-ACQUI-3-E

The Library of Congress/U.S. Government Printing Office International Exchange Program

by

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski
Professional Staff Member for
Library & Distribution Services
United States Congress
Joint Committee on Printing
Washington, D.C. USA

KEYWORD(S):

International Exchange
Government Publications
Library of Congress
U.S. Government Printing Office

For internal use only:

To be brought to meeting no:

---------137----------

Remarks:

to be presented orally ☒

for distribution only ☐

ABSTRACT

This paper provides a brief history of the United States Government international exchange program, a description of its members, procedures, publications exchanged, issues and proposals for improvement.

BRIEF HISTORY

The international exchange of Government publications between the United States and other countries has existed as a formal program since 1889. In 1886 two conventions were concluded at Brussels and were proclaimed by the President on January 15, 1889. One was a convention "for the international exchange of official documents, scientific, and literary publications", and the other was "for the immediate exchange of the official journals, parliamentary annals, and documents".

Congress in the late 1800's asked the Smithsonian Institution to add the exchange of government publications to their already thriving business of the exchange of scientific and literary publications for American educational institutions. The Smithsonian continues to this day to provide such a service for non government publications.

As you may recall, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 97-276 on October 1 of 1982 which: 1) shifted responsibility for distribution of the publications from the Smithsonian Institution to the Superintendent of Documents (GPO) and 2) required that the printing, binding, and distribution costs be paid by the department, office or establishment issuing the publication. Formerly the U.S. Congress paid for the printing of all agencies publications and the Smithsonian paid for distribution. Now Congress only pays for its publications. It is estimated that Congress will pay about $196,000 for the printing and distribution of about 200,000 copies of its publications in fiscal year 1986. The cost of the whole program has been reduced from over 2 million in 1981 to about one half a million in 1984.

The Superintendent of Documents receives up to 125 copies each of all Government publications, for distribution to those foreign governments which agree, as indicated by the Library of Congress, to send to the United States similar publications of their governments for delivery to the Library of Congress.

Section 1719, Title 44, of the United States Code clarifies which U.S. Government publications will not be in the program, "Confidential matter, blank forms, circular letters not of a public character, publications determined by the issuing department, office, or establishment to be required for official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have no public interest or educational value, and publications classified for reasons of national security". In Appendix 4 you will find the IFLA definition of official publications for international use.

The Library of Congress and the Joint Committee on Printing were in agreement since 1977 that the responsibility for the distribution of the publications should be transferred from the Smithsonian to the Government Printing Office. In 1977, the Joint Committee on Printing persuaded GPO and the Smithsonian to enter into an agreement, in which the Smithsonian paid GPO to sort, package and ship the publications. Service to the libraries improved dramatically, because GPO used smaller boxes, shipped by air rather than ocean freight and shipped more frequently. Shipment was also faster because GPO no longer had to transfer the publications across town to the Smithsonian, where the Smithsonian waited for enough publications for each library to fill a large ocean crate.

On May 7, 1980 Representative Nedzi introduced a bill (HR7302) to transfer the responsibility of the program to GPO. The bill passed the House, but did not pass the Senate. The Senate argued that the Congressional printing and binding appropriations already paid for the printing of the publications and that the executive branch should continue to pay for the handling and postage.

On January 8, 1982 the Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian wrote to the Public Printer that the $130,000 paid to GPO for FY 1982 was all the money available and suggested that GPO or LC ask Congress for more funds. The Public Printer replied that neither GPO or LC had statutory authority to ask for funding and that the distribution of publications had been discontinued on January 11, 1982. GPO stated that if it did not receive additional funding, it would have to revert to the past practice of sending the publications to the Smithsonian for distribution. The Smithsonian had not asked for sufficient funding because they thought that the Nedzi bill would pass and thus GPO would be responsible for the funding.

The Librarian of Congress appealed to Senator Mathias, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing for help in saving the program. Senator Mathias directed GPO to continue printing and storing the publications, until a solution could be found. At the same time he asked the Librarian whether the exchange libraries would accept microfiche and he asked GPO to do a cost study on how much could be saved if some 90% of the publications were converted to microfiche. The study by GPO showed that $609,000 could be saved in FY 1982, $1,395,000 in FY 1983 and $1,178,000 in FY 1984.

Since it was a crisis situation, the Librarian of Congress did not survey the libraries, instead he based his response, requesting microfiche upon the results of a survey of the libraries conducted in the Spring of 1981. The Joint Committee on Printing had asked him to survey the libraries about whether they would accept the final Congressional Record in microfiche. At the time, he had told them that future fiscal constraints might permit no alternative to distribution in microfiche. 78% responded that they would like to receive microfiche immediately, and the remaining 22%, while opting for paper voiced no objection to accepting microfiche should it become the only format available. An earlier survey indicated that 23 exchange libraries out of 47 wanted to receive the U.S. Congressional Serial Set in fiche.

Senator Mathias worked with other Members of Congress and executive branch agencies to find funds to keep the program going until legislation was passed in 1982 that not only transferred the program to GPO, but spread the costs of the printing and distribution of exchange publications over the entire Federal Government, with each issuing agency bearing its proportionate share.

MEMBERS & PROCEDURES OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The members of the international exchange program are determined in three ways.

1) By executive agreement arranged through the U.S. State Department and the comparable ministry of another country.

2) Through a treaty (e.g. Brussels Convention, 1936 Buenos Aires convention, and the 1957 UNESCO agreement).

3) Informal agreement between the Library of Congress and another library.

The Library of Congress determines what and how many publications will go to exchange partners. LC has established three categories of exchange partners.

1) Full set - Exchange Libraries receive approximately 20,000 pieces a year. Titles are among those marked with a black dot or bullet in the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications. The bullet indicates that those titles go to domestic depository libraries.

2) Partial set - Exchange Libraries receive approximately 2,000 pieces a year. (See appendix 2 for the list of titles in a partial set.) The titles are determined by LC after looking at which titles are most frequently requested by foreign libraries.

3) Selections - Number of titles sent to exchange libraries vary according to the agreement between LC and the library.

LC determines whether a library will be a full, partial or selections partner depending upon the type of agreement negotiated and the number and kinds of publications the exchange partner sends to LC. GPO ships the publications for the full and partial sets and LC ships those for the selections set. Some libraries have been reduced from full to partial because they could not handle the large number of publications, or because they could not provide sufficient number of similar publications.

The majority of exchange partners are national, parliamentary or university libraries. There are 32 full, 34 partial set and 21 selections partners. Appendix 1 is a chart which shows the geographic location of the exchange libraries throughout the world.

The number of titles sent to exchange partners were 25,051 in 1983 and 28,140 in 1984. The number of copies went from 973,806 in 1983 to 1,055,511 in 1984. The total program cost $1,708,000 in 1982, $781,571 in 1983 and $552,714 in 1984. Even though the number of titles and copies went up, the postage and handling charges went down. Handling charges were $40,387 for 1983 and $26,352 for 1984. Postage charges were $54,203 in 1983 and $24,522 in 1984. Part of this reduction in cost is attributable to the fact that the percentage of hard copy went down from 10.1% to 6.2%, special boxes for microfiche were used, and more stringent controls on postage charges were instituted. For graphs giving statistics for 1983 and 1984 see appendices 5 through 17.

The Library of Congress received some 205,000 pieces in return in FY 1984. The number of pieces sent by the exchange partners range from several hundred pieces to over thirty thousand. The number varies according to the number of titles issued by the government of the exchange partner. LC will accept a smaller number of pieces if they are confident that the library is sending most of its governments publications.

ISSUES

A number of our exchange partners have shared their concerns about the program with me and staff at LC and GPO. They explained that the publications are valuable to them, and if they don't get certain publications fast enough or not at all, they have to try to purchase them. Many times the publications are not for sale. They also cannot assure other libraries in the country that they have the publications so they can provide them on inter-library loan. I would like to discuss some of the issues raised and tell you what we have done in the last couple of years to improve the system.

Mailing

There were complaints that the microfiche were arriving in bad shape because they were being placed in the boxes with paper copies. GPO has since adopted a special box for microfiche and LC has received no recent complaints.

Some libraries asked if the microfiche could be arranged in order. This is not possible since the fiche arrives from the contractor in no particular order and it would take a subtantial amount of staff time to put them in order.

Quality

The quality of the fiche is good. LC examines the fiche it receives and sends unsatisfactory fiche back to GPO for refilming. The duplicates you are receiving may be replacements, so don't give them away before you check.

MISSING PUBLICATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGEOVER FROM PAPER TO MICROFICHE

Exchange libraries are unhappy because some titles, which they had received on a fairly regular and reliable basis in paper are not coming at all, are coming with gaps, or are coming in a mixture of paper and fiche. The Library of Congress receives a set of diazo fiche of all publications sent to the libraries, so LC can keep track of what is being sent. In November of 1984, LC staff met with GPO staff to discuss the missing publications. LC gave GPO a list of titles showing which issues were missing. GPO promised to film those issues as soon as possible. GPO had a 12,000 title backlog. Because of a hiring freeze, GPO was unable to film everything on the same timetable. Priority was given to titles which the domestic depository libraries had asked for in fiche. Since these titles were also in the exchange program, the thinking was that these were the most important titles for both sets of libraries.

In December 1984, the Joint Committee on Printing asked GPO to speed up the filming and directed GPO to supply LC with a set of silver intermediate masters of the microfiche so that LC will be better equipped to fill claims. GPO took steps to add staff and as of June 1985 the backlog was cut to 10,500. GPO expects that by October 1985, new staff will be on board, and they will make a concerted effort to eliminate the backlog.

Some of the exchange libraries have suggested that a list of priority titles for conversion to microfiche be compiled. Would this group be interested in helping to compile such a list?

LC has also given GPO a list of the serials and monographs that should remain in paper. See Appendix 2. We would like to hear from you if you think these titles are the ones that should remain in paper.

SELECTIVITY

The law reserves the decision on how many titles, what titles and how those titles will be selected to the Library of Congress. Nathan Einhorn, the former Chief of LC Exchange and Gift Division and I worked toward the goal of allowing exchange partners more selectivity. We envisioned a system somewhat like the one used for the domestic depository library program. In the haste of getting a law passed to save the program and the death of our friend Nathan Einhorn, that goal was set aside for awhile. GPO staff also believed in 1982 that it would be cheaper to just film and ship everything. Peter Bridge, current Chief of the LC Exchange and Gift Division and I have since agreed that it would be a good idea to discuss the possibility of selectivity again. We would like to start out by discussing it with you, the members of IFLA.

The domestic depository libraries are allowed to select publications by agency and series. They receive a publication called List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries, and a set of item cards.

The List of Classes is arranged by the Superintendent of Documents Classification system. The Superintendent of Documents system is based upon issuing agency. Following is an example from the List.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

Secretarys Office and Department Series

A1.1: Annual Report 6
A1.2: General Publications 10
A1.77: Home and Garden Bulletins 11
FOREST SERVICE
A13.1: Annual Report 80
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY
A17.17: Library lists (numbered) 95-A

One set of item cards is provided along with the list. This set consists of 3X5 inch cards with each card representing one individual series or several series available for selection by depository libraries. Each card gives the item number, issuing agency, series title, Superintendent of Documents classification number, format and annotation. The item number assigned to a series is the controlling number for that series regardless of change of title, or transfer or change in the name of the issuing agency.

Example of item card.

Item No. 150

Census Bureau
Commerce Department

Statistical Abstract of U.S. C3.134:
Annual. Published since 1878, Standard summary of statistics on social, political & economic organization of the U.S. It is for reference & a guide to other publications.
Survey 77-274 Depository Library No. ————

The selections for each library is maintained in a computer file. Periodically, GPO issues a computer printout so each depository may change its selections. GPO recently installed a lighted bin distribution system where the computer tells the light over each bin whether the library assigned to that bin gets a copy of the publication.

Each box of publications is accompanied by a shipping list. Sample of SL is below.

Depository Shipping List No. 85-321-M

Date June 6, 1985 Page 1 of 1

ITEM NUMBER	CLASSIFICATION NUMBER	TITLE
		DISTRIBUTION IS NOW BEING MADE ACCORDING TO SELECTION UPDATE 1985-#1 (i.e. RECEIVED BY JANUARY 25, 1985.)
227-A-31	C 55.214/28:87/13	Climatological Data Annual Summary New Mexico, Vol. 87, No. 13, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1983
424-B-8	D 301.89/8:85-4	Current News, Fraud and Waste Edition, U.S. Dept. of Defense, March 25, 1985
431-C-2	TD 1.15/5:984/supp. 12	Large Multiengine Airplanes, Type Certificate Data Sheets and Specifications. Vol. III. Supplement. U.S. Dept of Transportation December 1984

Claims are made by sending back the SL with a notation as to missing items.

I propose that a system similar to the domestic depository system be adopted for the exchange libraries. In order to limit the paper work, perhaps the selection of publications could be based upon selection by agencies (e.g. all of the House Appropriation Committee publications), rather than by individual series. There are about 6000 series. Updating of selections could be limited to once a year or ev-

ery other year. Libraries would receive shipping lists in their boxes so they would know what is supposed to be in the box and could claim what is missing. Many libraries are now claiming publications that they think were shipped, but are still in the microfiching backlog. I understand that many libraries have to wait until they get a copy of the Monthly Catalog to find class numbers and determine if a publication they did not receive was actually published. In these days of cut backs in in all areas of Government, it is difficult to keep up with what has ceased being published.

I believe that going to selectivity would be beneficial for the following reasons:

1) It would allow the libraries to receive just what they need.

2) It would cut back on the number of publications sent to libraries, therefore saving on the cost of printing, handling and postage.

3) It would cut back on the number of claims for missing publications.

4) It would make it easy for the libraries to assign class numbers to paper copies since the class number is on the shipping list.

I further propose that we try a pilot project with several libraries to test procedures and determine costs and benefits. We may want to include 2 full and 2 partial partners from different parts of the world. What do you think of this proposal?

APPENDIX 1 -INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE LIBRARIES

AFRICA	
Egypt	1 full
Ethiopa	1 partial
Guyana	1 selections
Israel	1 full
Lebanon	1 selections
South Africa	1 full
ASIA	
Afghanistan	1 selections
China	1 selections
India	1 full
	2 partial
	4 selections
Japan	2 full
Korea, Republic of	2 full
Liberia	1 selections
Malaysia	1 partial
Pakistan	1 selections
Phillipines	1 full
Singapore	1 selections
Sudan	1 selections
Taiwan	1 full
	1 partial
Thailand	1 partial
Turkey	1 partial
USSR	1 full
AUSTRALIA	2 full
	5 partial
CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA	
Brazil	1 partial
Chile	1 full
Colombia	1 partial
Costa Rica	1 partial
Cuba	1 full
Dominican Republic	1 selections
Guatemala	1 selections
CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA - Cont.	
Honduras	1 partial
	1 selections
Jamaica	1 partial
	1 selections
Venezuela	1 partial
EUROPE	
Austria	1 partial
Belgium	1 full
Bulgaria	1 partial
Czechoslovakia	1 full
Denmark	1 full
England	2 full
Federal Republic of Germany	1 full
	2 partial
Finland	1 full
France	1 full
German Demo. Repub.	1 full
Ireland	1 full
Maltay	1 selections
Netherlands	1 full
Norway	1 partial
Portugal	1 partial
Scotland	1 partial
Spain	1 full
Sweden	1 full
Switzerland	1 full (UN Library)
	1 selections
NEW ZEALAND	1 full
NORTH AMERICA	
Canada	1 full
	7 partial
	2 selections
Iceland	1 partial
Mexico	1 partial

Full set - approximately 20,000 pieces a year.
Partial set - approximately 2,000 pieces a year.
Selections - amount varies.

APPENDIX 2

SERIALS AND MONOGRAPHS TO REMAIN IN HARD COPY
FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

Agricultural Research
American Education
Background Notes
Business America
Business Conditions Digest
Department of State Bulletin
Economic Indicators
Foreign Agriculture
Government Reports Announcements - Biweekly & Annual Cumulation
International Economic Indicators
Journal of Research of the NBS
Journal of the Nat. Cancer Inst.
Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications
Monthly Labor Review
Mosaic - NSF
Overseas Business Reports - Comm.
Problems of Communism
Public Health Reports
Public Roads
Resources in Education
Science and Technolgy Aerospace Reports, NASA - Semimonthly
Social Security Bulletin
Survey of Current Business
Treasury Bulletin
Congressional Record (Daily)
Federal Register
Weekly Compilation of Pres. Docs.
Yearbook of Agriculture
Statistical Abstract & Supplements (e.g. Pocket data book, etc.)
International Population Reports
World Population
Digest of Educational Statistics
Nat. Register of Historic Places
Minerals Yearbook
Bd. of Geog. Names Gazeteers
Uniform Crime Reports
Treaties in Force
Digest of U.S. Practice in International Law
Budget & Appendix
Economic Report of the President
U.S. Government Manual
Statutes at Large
Public Papers of the Presidnet
NASA - Spec. Pubs.
Handbook of North American Indians
ZIP Code Directory
Congressional Directory
U.S. Code

APPENDIX 3
PARTIAL SET

USDA Yearbook
Agricultural Statistics
Foreign Agriculture
Agricultural Research
Commerce Annual Report
Business America
Foreign Economic Trends and Their Implications for the U.S.
Construction Review
International Economic Indicators
Journal of Research of the National Bureau of Standards
Official Gazette of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Overseas Business Reports
Survey of Current Business
Government Reports Announcements
Statistical Abstract
Pocket Data Book
Foreign Trade Reports
FT 130 General Imports of Cotton, Wool and Manmade Fiber
FT 135 U.S. General Imports, Schedule A, Commodity by Country
FT 410 U.S. Exports, Schedule E, Commodity by Country
FT 800 U.S. Trade with Puerto Rico and U.S. Possessions
FT 810 Bunker Fuels: Oil and Coal Laden in the U.S. on Vessels Engaged in Foreign Trade
FT 900 Summary of U.S. Export and Import Merchandise Trade
FT 990 Highlights of U.S. Export and Import Trade
Congressional Directory
Congressional Record (final ed)
U.S. Code
Hearings
Economic Indicators
DOD Annual Report
Nautical Almanac
Corps of Engineers Annual Report
Country Studies (Area Handbooks)
Education Annual Report
American Education
Energy Annual Report
Fed. Maritime Commission Annual Report
FCC Annual Report
Annual Report of the Comptroller General
Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications
GSA Annual Report
U.S. Government Manual
Public Papers of the President
Statutes at Large
Public Health Reports
Social Security Bulletin
-- Statistical supplement
Vital Statistics of the U.S.
HUD Annual Report
HUD Statistical Yearbook
Mineral Yearbook
Minerals Perspectives
Justice Annual Report
Uniform Crime Reports
INS Annual Report
Drug Enforcement
Federal Probation
U.S. Reports
Annual Report of Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Customs Law Digest
Labor Annual Report
Monthly Labor Review
Bur. of Labor Statistics Bulletins
All LC pubs available through GPO
NLRB Annual Report
NSG Annual Report
Mosaic
U.S. Postal Service Annual Report
National ZIP Code Directory
OPM Annual Report
Economic report of the President
Budget in Brief
Department of State Bulletin
Foreign Relations of the U.S.
Diplomatic List
U.S. Treaties (bound)
Treaties in Force
Background Notes
SEC Annual Report
SBA Annual Report
Smithsonian Year
Treasury Annual Report on State of Finances
--- Statistical Appendix
IRS Annual Report
Bureau of the Mint Annual Report
Comtroller of the Currency Annual Report
Treasury Bulletin
Dept. of Transportation Ann. Rpt.
Public Roads
MARAD Annual Report
VA Annual Report

APPENDIX 4

DEFINITION OF OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL USE

by
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Official Publications Section

Adopted August 1983

After three years of discussion, the IFLA Official Publications Section has adopted a definition of official publications for use internationally - for instance in library schools, in the design of courses, in international exchange, within libraries, or in the arrangement of bibliographies. It is an attempt - brave, some will say - to provide a working guide that will be useful everywhere, while accommodating the profound differences of interpretation that exist even between countries that are geographically and culturally close.

1. An official publication is any item produced by reprographic or any other method issued by an organisation that is an official body, and available to an audience wider than that body.

2. An official body is:

(i) any legislature of a state, or federation of states; or of a province (state) or regional, local or other administrative sub-division;

(ii) any executive agency of the central government of such a state or federation of states or of a province (state) or regional, local or other administrative sub-division,

(iii) or any court or judicial organ;

(iv) any other organization which was set up by an official body as in (i), (ii) and (iii) above, and maintains continuing links with that body whether through direct funding or through its reporting mechanism or its accountability;

(v) any organisation of which the members belong to any of the above 4 categories, including intergovernmental organisations provided that the body is considered to be official in the country concerned.

3. An official publication is defined by the status of the issuing source regardless of the subject-matter, content or physical form.

NOTES

(1) For the purposes of this definition, the term "official publication" is comparable to terms used in some countries such as "government publication" and "government document".

(2) The following bodies:

- universities

- learned societies and academies

- industrial and trade associations and chambers of commerce

- libraries, museums and art galleries

- independent research institutes not direct recipients of public funds

will be included as official bodies according to the practice of the individual country.

(3) Political parties will not normally be considered as official bodies unless in the practice or constitution of a particular country there is reason to do so.

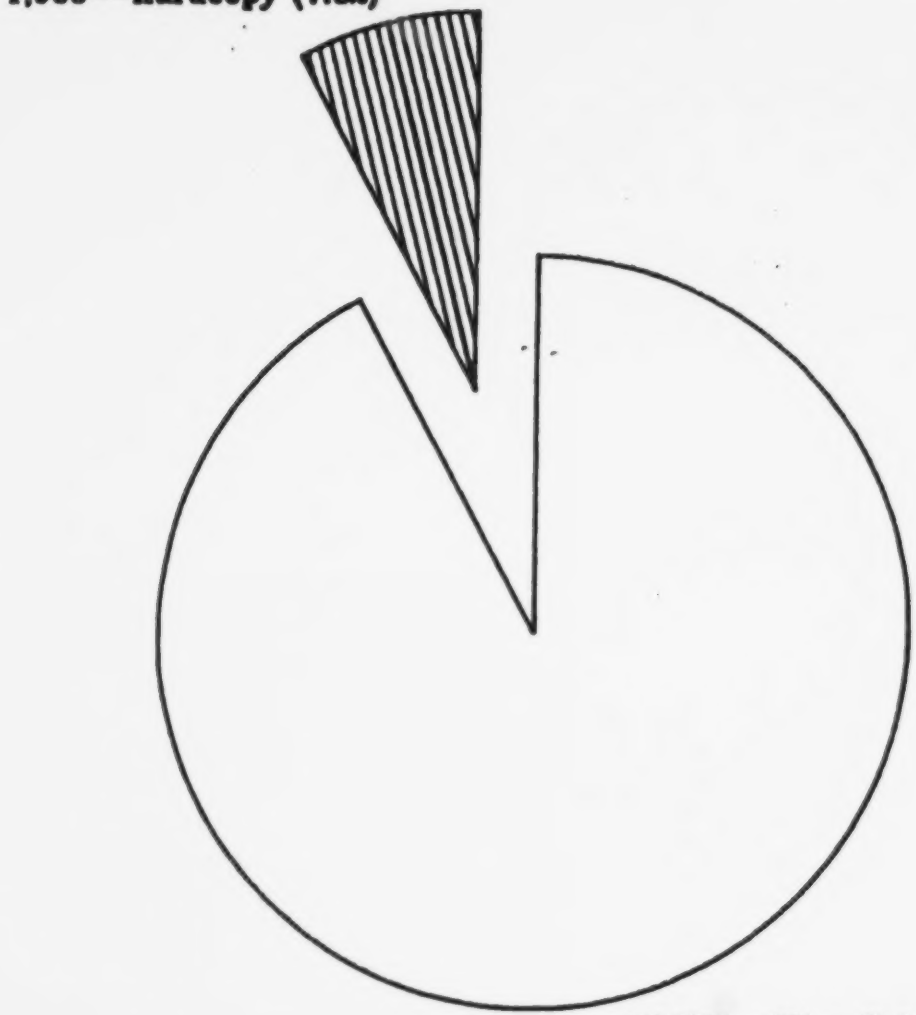
(4) Nationalised enterprises and banks, public corporations and other statutory bodies set up to carry out industrial or other productive activity will be considered as official bodies according to the practice of the individual country. However, state majority ownership of capital and heavy direct subsidy in enterprises that are otherwise nominally independent will not cause those enterprises to be considered as official bodies.

(5) Publications originating in official bodies but published by or with the co-operation of commercial firms, universities or independent research institutes, or any other non-official bodies, will normally be considered as official publications.

APPENDIX 5

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

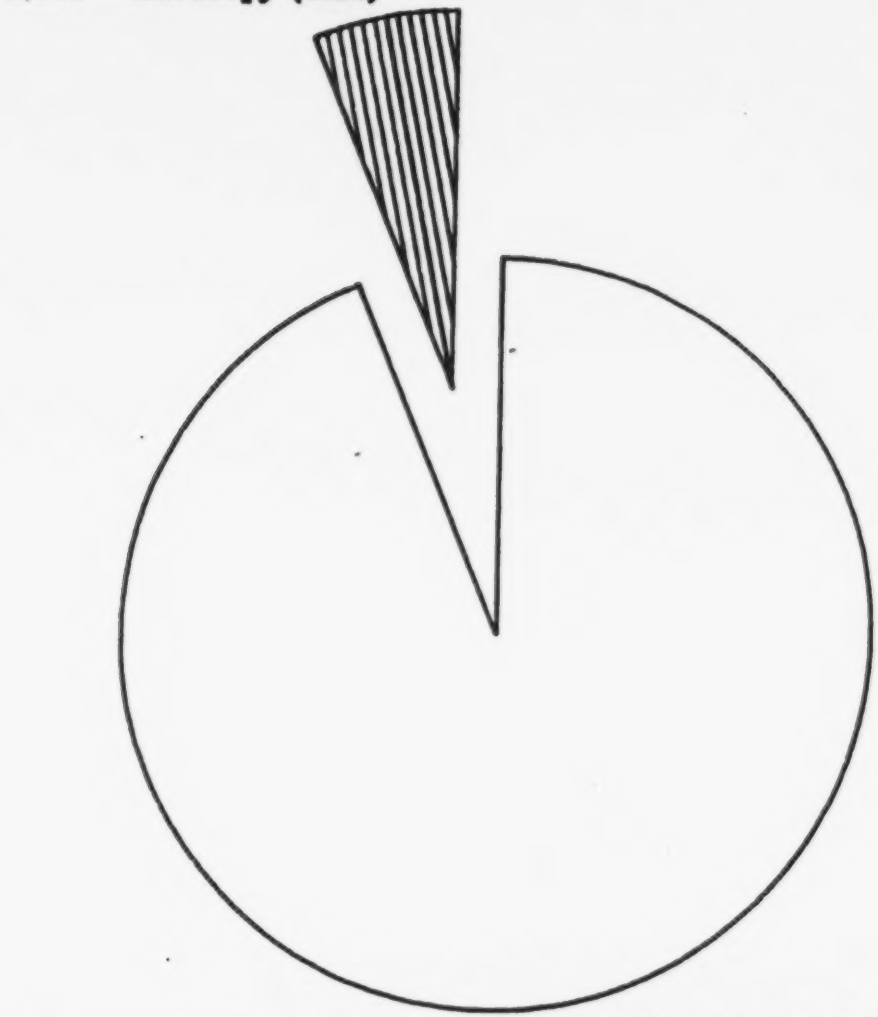
Total Titles Distributed (1983)



APPENDIX 6

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

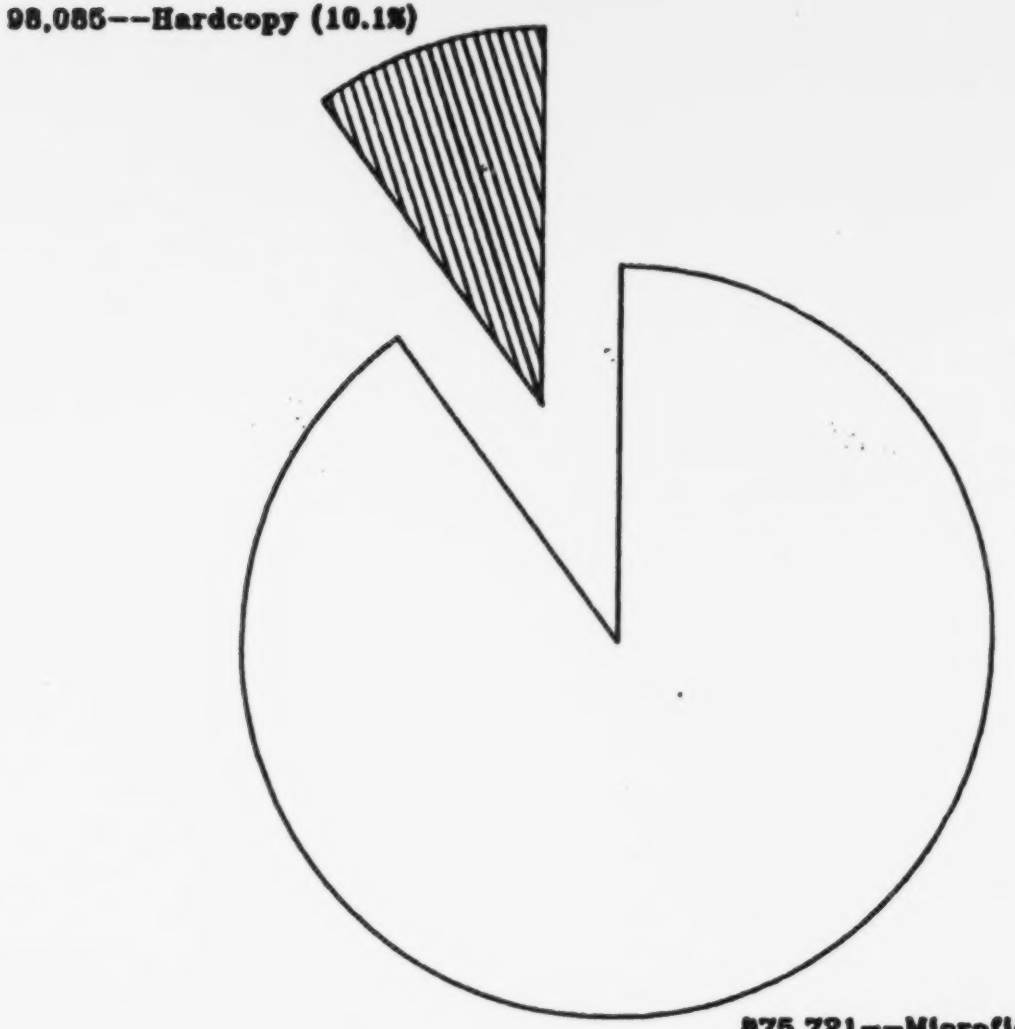
Total Titles Distributed (1984)



APPENDIX 7

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Total Copies Distributed (1983)

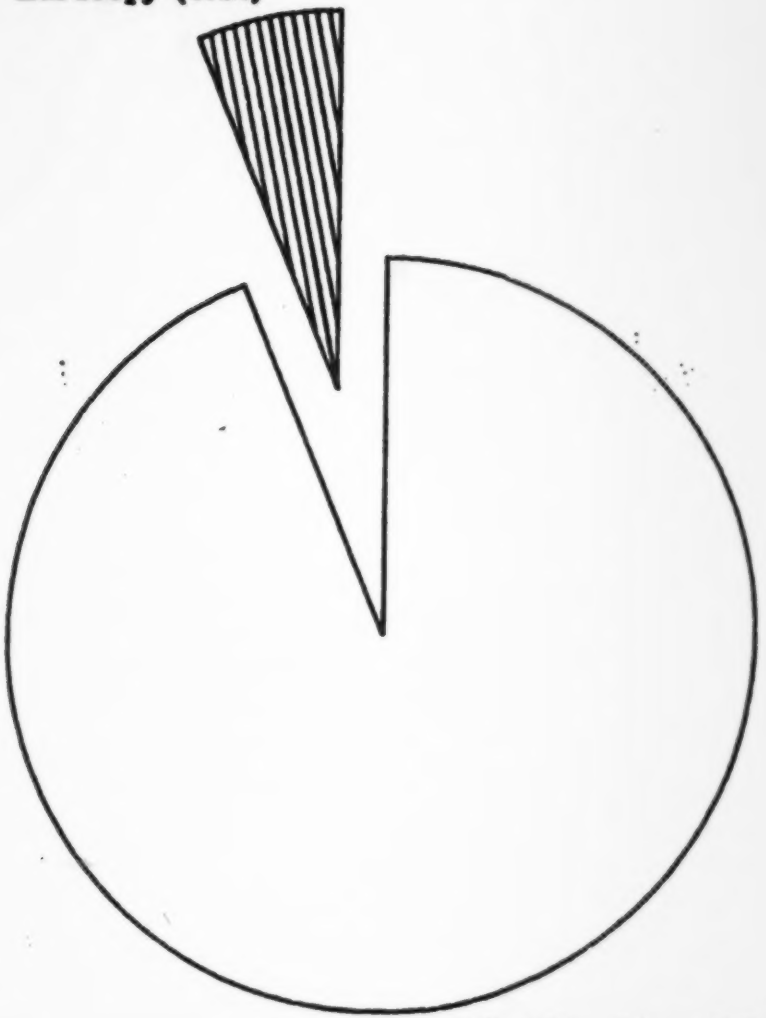


APPENDIX 6

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

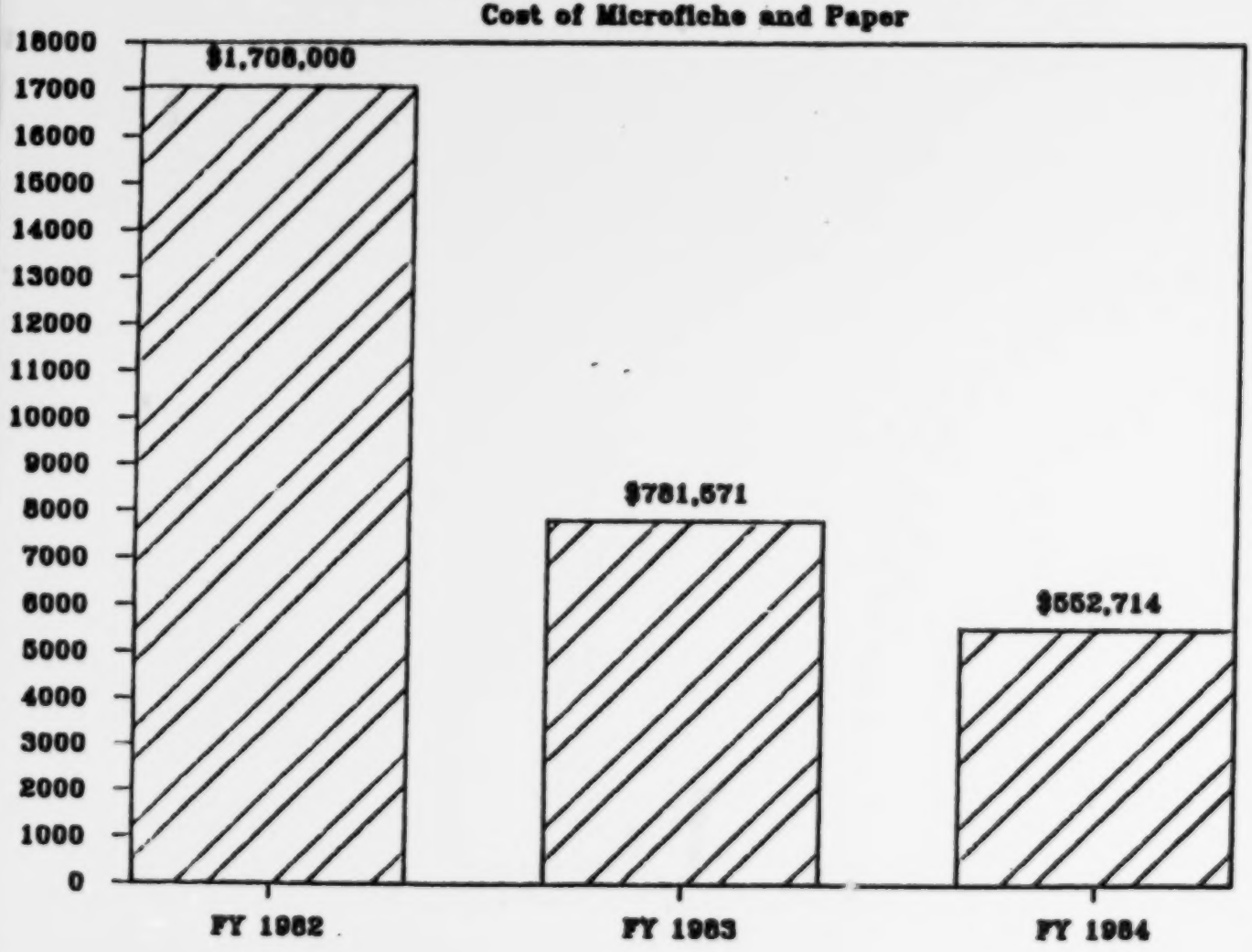
Total Copies Distributed (1984)

65,388--Hardcopy (6.2%)

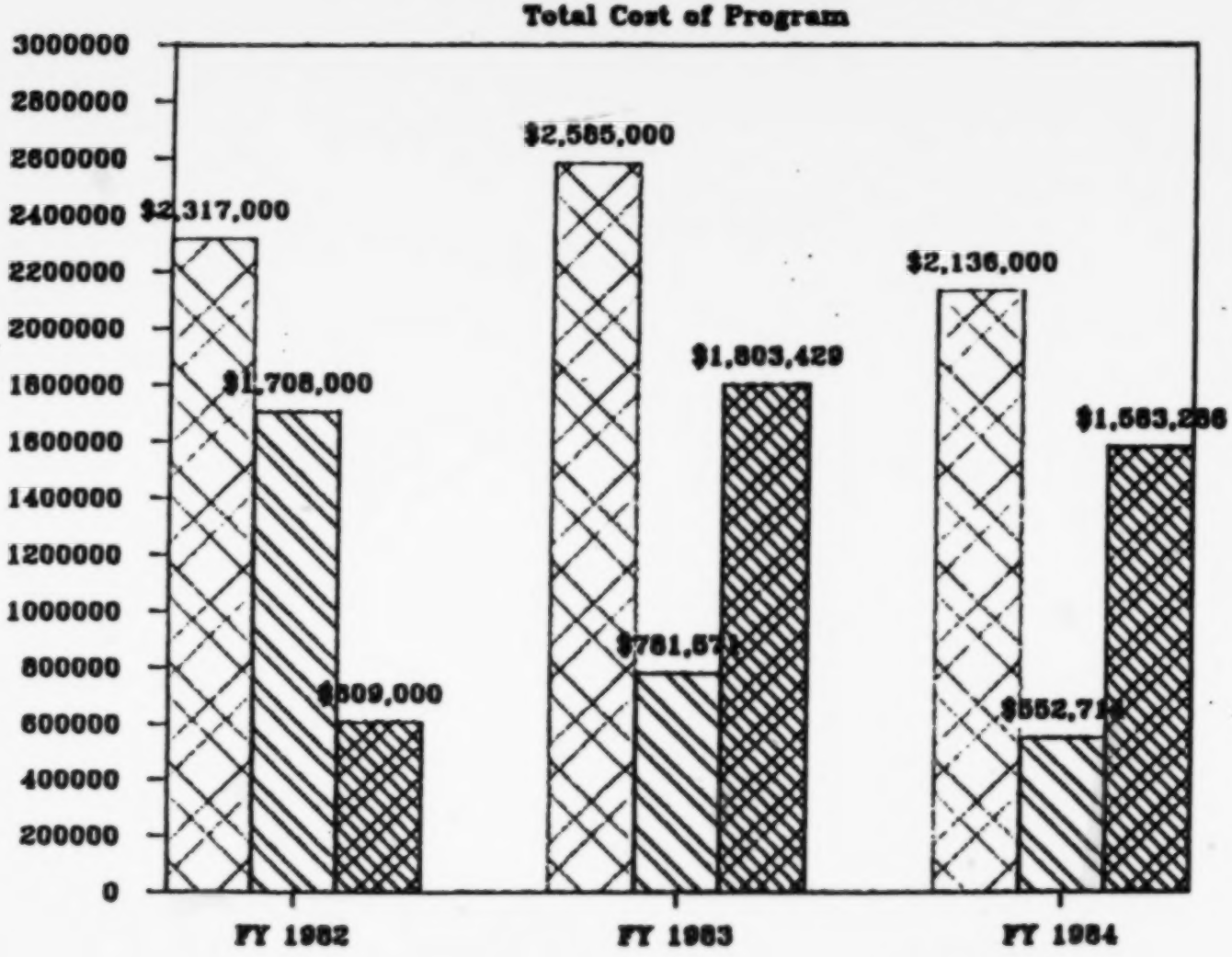


990,125--Microfiche (93.8%)

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM



INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM



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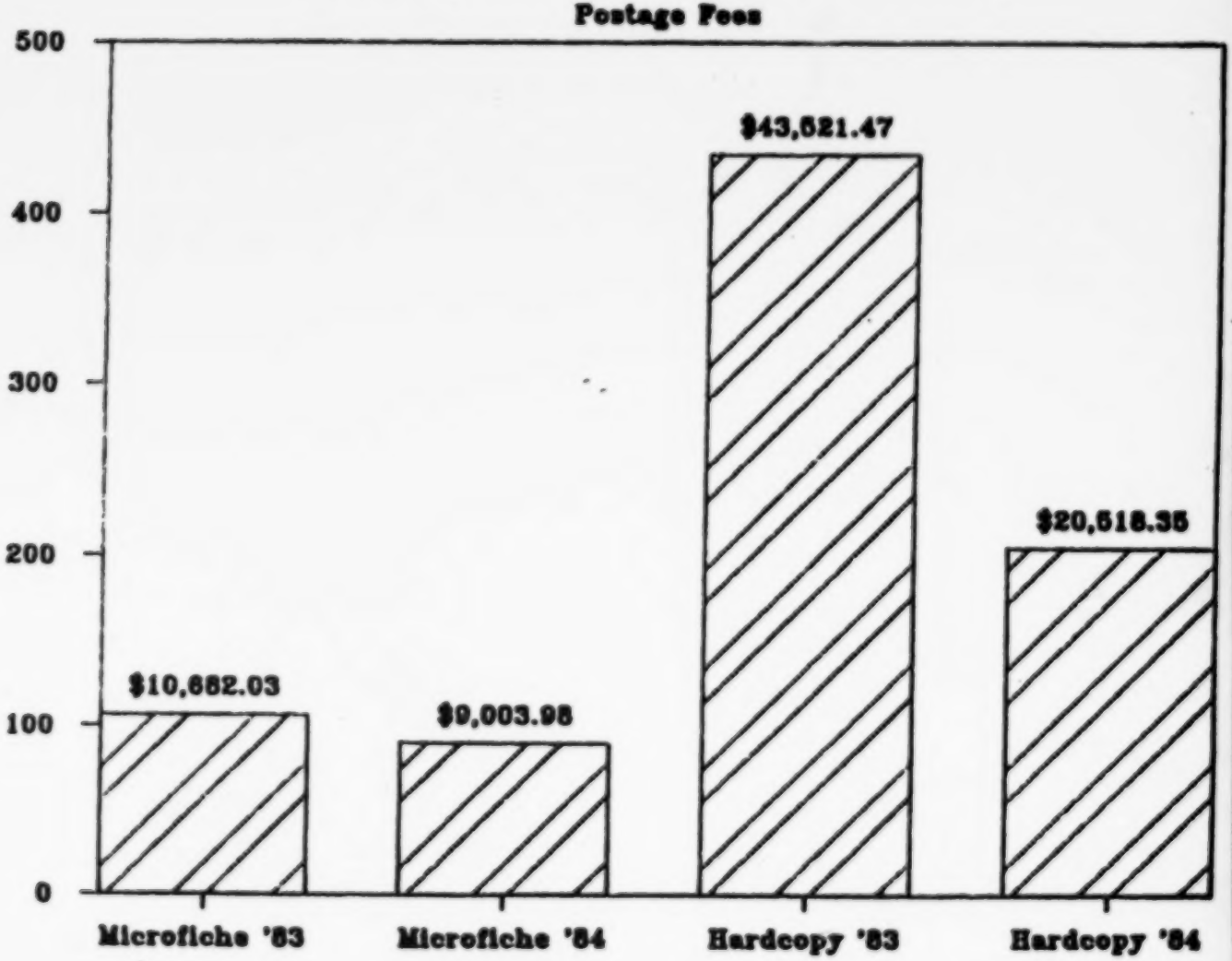
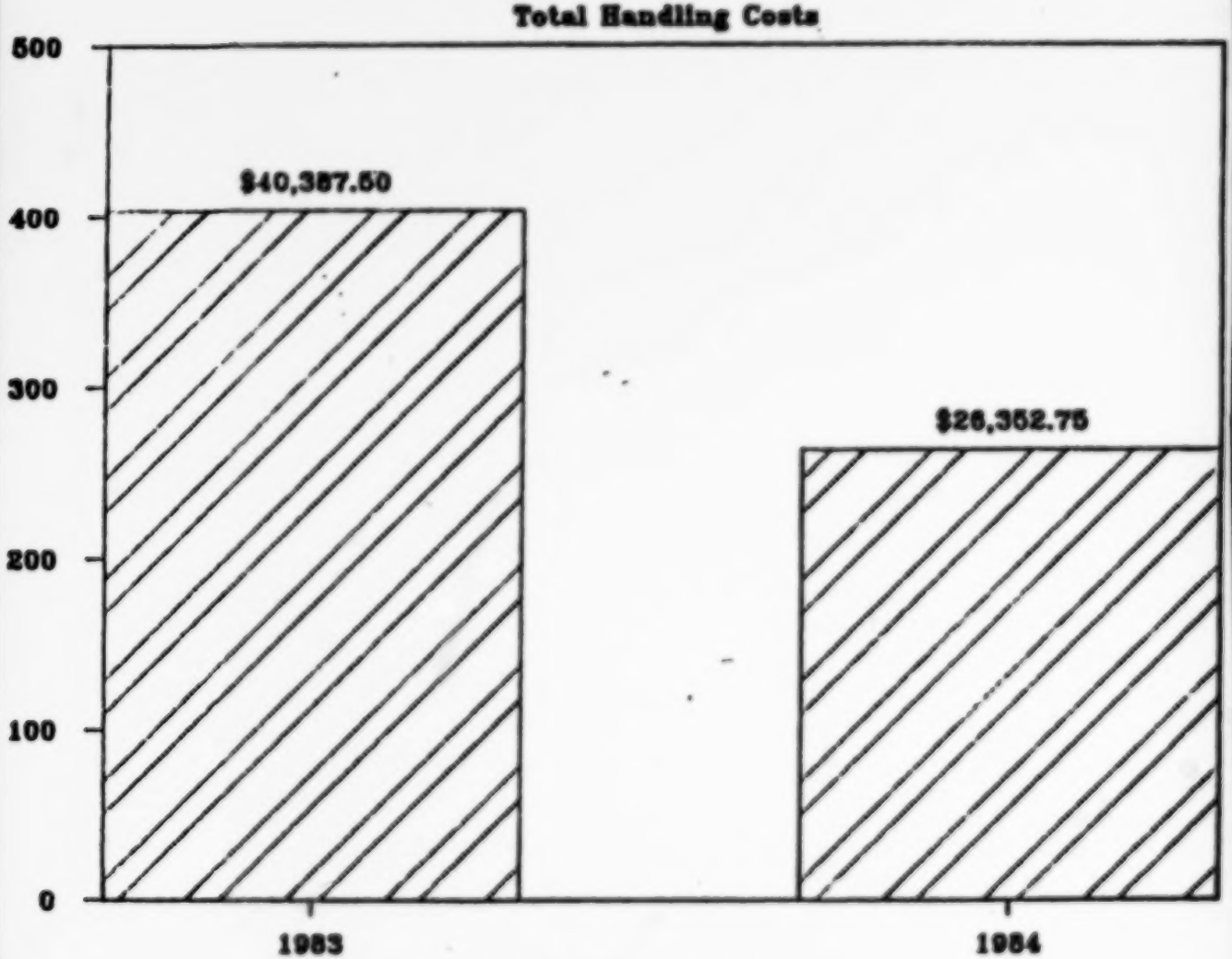


JCP 6/85

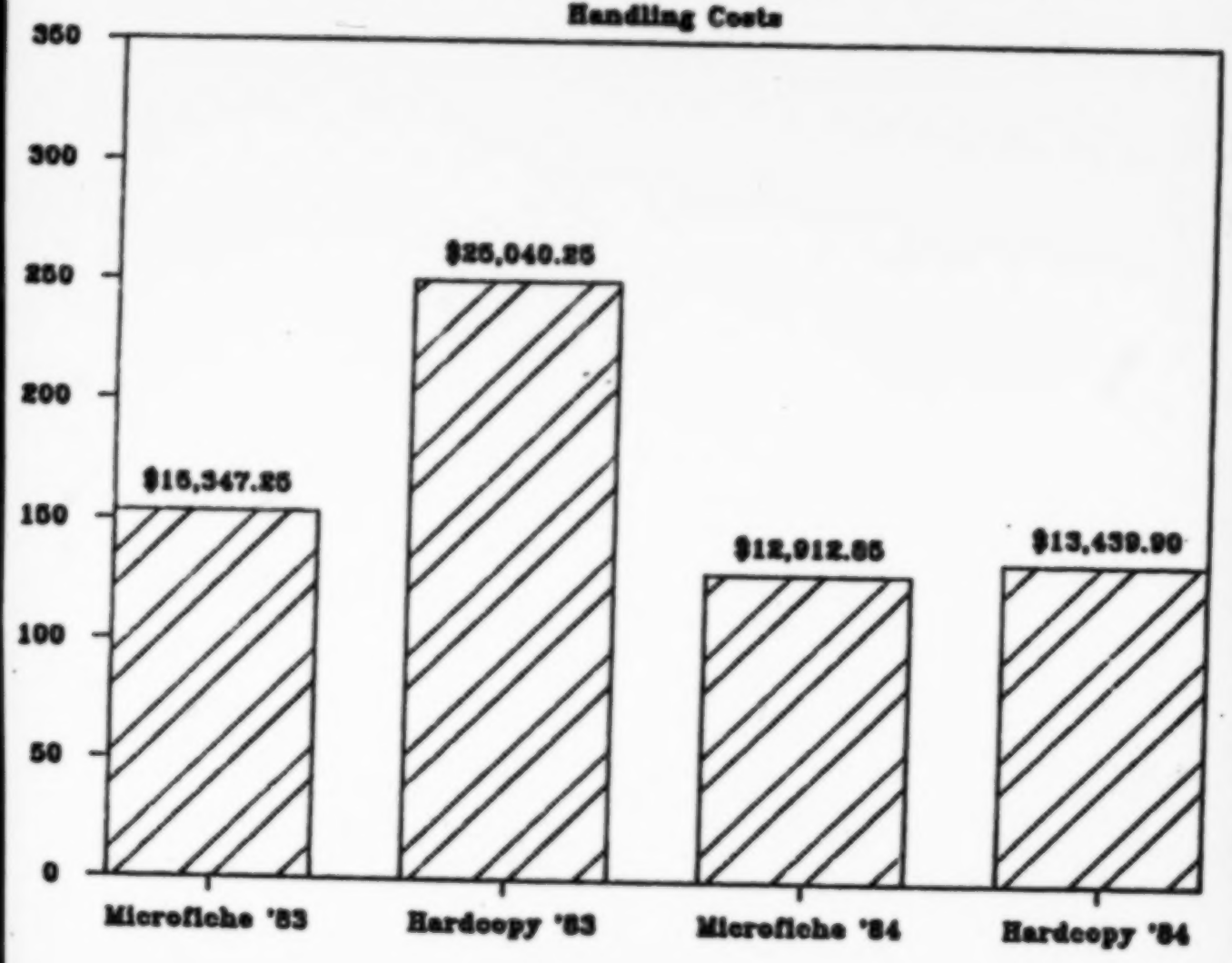
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM



MICROFICHE AND HARDCOPY

JCP 6/85

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM



JCP 6/85

IFLA

1985

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, CHICAGO

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Acquisition and Exchange

123-ACQUI-4-E

De-Acquisition in University Libraries

by

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and

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Göteborg, Sweden

KEYWORD(S):

De-acquisition
Weeding
Discard
University libraries

For internal use only:

To be brought to meeting no:

182

Remarks:

to be presented orally ☒

for distribution only ☐

DE-ACQUISITION IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

by

Per Morten Bryhn and Paul Hallberg

Abstract

A questionnaire with 15 questions on various aspects of de-acquisition was sent to 474 university libraries worldwide. There were 237 answers, 200 of which were analysed. De-acquisition is here defined as the process whereby material (excluding duplicates) once added to the library's stock ceases to be part of that stock.

70% of the libraries studied were allowed to de-acquire. 20 libraries were actually forced to do so by their governing bodies.

Among libraries allowed to de-acquire, shortage of space, physical condition of item, and amount of recorded use appear to be the most important factors affecting decisions. The most frequently cited impediments to de-acquisition are shortage of staff, demand for completeness of collections, and opposition of academic staff.

Only 20 libraries could refer to any document describing their policy and experience in this field.

A very large number of libraries currently lacking an explicit policy made comments to the effect that they expect to have to consider framing such a policy within the next few years.

DE-ACQUISITION IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

by

Per Morten Bryhn and Paul Hallberg

The subject of weeding academic library collections is not likely to be regarded by the average librarian as a very exciting one. It is generally looked upon as a purely negative activity, something that nobody will engage in unless forced to by lack of shelf space, something of very low priority and consequently postponed for as long as possible. Furthermore there is always the risk of stirring up feelings of anger and suspicion among patrons, particularly academic staff. Thus there has been some justification for the talk about the "ungrasped nettle" of librarianship.

Nevertheless, growing bookstocks and rising costs of storage are forcing an increasing number of libraries to recognize the fact that sooner or later, if not now, they will have to get rid of some old books in order to be able to accommodate new ones, and that they might as well adjust to the inevitable and do what will have to be done anyway in a planned and orderly fashion. Some are even becoming aware that weeding may in fact be a very healthy process for the library, something that is likely to improve its services.

The literature on weeding is quite extensive, particularly in the English-speaking countries. No attempt will be made to review it here; it will be sufficient to refer to the bibliographic surveys provided by e.g. Cooper (1968)[1], Seymour (1972)[2], Rice (1978)[3], Gilder and others (1980)[4], Mosher (1980)[5], and Slote (1982)[6]. Most writers seem to have focused on selecting the criteria to be used in identifying little-used material for withdrawal, some arguing that only objectively verifiable criteria should be taken into account, such as date of imprint or accession, or frequency of circulation, while others contend that subjective title-by-title evaluation must also be applied. There seems to be universal agreement, however, that monographic and serial publications should be treated separately and that weeding policies will always differ widely between public and academic libraries, between large research libraries with national or regional obligations and small and specialized institute libraries, and between different subject fields.

The terminology in this sphere of activity can be rather confusing to the novice, who will encounter a large number of terms overlapping wholly or in part, such as weeding, pruning, withdrawal, discard, disposal, de-acquisition, deselection, negative selection, selective retirement, and relegation. Some of them, e.g. weeding, seem to be more inclusive, giving no indication of whether the material weeded is retained by the library or not. In the words of McGaw (1956)[7], "when a book is discarded, it is weeded, but ... when it is weeded, it is not necessarily discarded".

Much study has been devoted to questions relating to the shifting of little-used or obsolete material from open to closed access shelving, or to off-campus or remote storage which the library may have at its disposal. It is only natural that such storage, if available, should serve as a first resort. It does provide the opportunity to correct possible mistakes, and patrons will probably regard such measures as less controversial and irrevocable than discard. The psychological barrier against complete withdrawal will in its turn be somewhat reduced if there exists a national or regional repository to which the material withdrawn can be transferred with the guarantee that it will always be available without unreasonable delay.[8]

As was explained in the covering letter for our questionnaire (see Appendix), the present study is in principle limited to what is most clearly expressed by the term de-acquisition, i.e. the process whereby materials which were once acquired and added to the library's stock ceases to be part of that stock. Thus we are not primarily concerned with relegation to storage with retained ownership, except as a possible alternative to de-acquisition. In addition, we wish to concentrate on the de-acquisition of last copies in libraries, excluding duplicate items.

Our aim is to study to what extent and with what motivation university libraries worldwide are currently practising de-acquisition, and whether they are doing so according to written or implicit policies. Technical methods of de-acquiring library materials fall outside the scope we have set for ourselves, but we do try to get some rough idea of the ways in which university libraries dispose of the material they de-acquire and of the major factors affecting their decisions whether to de-acquire or not.

A questionnaire (see Appendix) was distributed to 474 university libraries all over the world, selected from the World Guide to Libraries. 237 ques-

tionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of exactly 50%. A few of the replies were too incomplete to be of any real use, however. Moreover, a small number of libraries reporting holdings of less than 250,000 volumes and/or an annual growth not exceeding 5,000 volumes were eventually excluded. This left us with a material of exactly 200 responses, which were analysed by computer. The distribution by country of all questionnaires mailed, returned and studied respectively is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution by country of questionnaires mailed, returned, and studied

Country	No. mailed	No. returned	% response	No. studied
Malawi	1	1		0
South Africa	7	6		6
Zimbabwe	1	1		0
Other African	18	0		0
Total Africa	27	8	30	6
Canada	24	9		7
USA	93	54		54
Total North America	117	63	54	61
Barbados	1	1		0
Brazil	10	3		2
Jamaica	1	1		1
Other Central & South American	21	0		0
Total Central & South America	33	5	15	3
India	8	1		1
Japan	10	6		5
Malaysia	1	1		0
People's Rep. of China	11	4		4
Sri Lanka	1	1		1
Thailand	1	1		1
Other Asian	20	0		0
Total Asia	52	14	27	12
Australia	11	9		8
New Zealand	4	3		2
Total Australasia	15	12	80	10

Table 1 (contin.)

Country	No. mailed	No. returned	% response	No. studied
Austria	6	3		3
Belgium	5	3		2
Czechoslovakia	3	1		1
Denmark	7	7		4
Eire	2	2		2
Federal Rep. of Germany	32	18		17
Finland	6	6		5
France	15	7		2
German Democratic Rep.	6	3		2
Greece	1	1		1
Hungary	3	3		3
Iceland	1	1		0
Italy	15	5		3
Netherlands	7	4		4
Norway	5	5		4
Poland	8	5		3
Romania	3	3		3
Spain	4	3		1
Sweden	6	6		5
Switzerland	8	6		6
United Kingdom	42	34		27
USSR	38	6		6
Yugoslavia	5	3		3
Other European	2	0		0
Total Europe	230	135	59	107
Grand Total	474	237	50	200

It will be noticed that there was a heavy preponderance (more than 3/4) of North American, Australasian, and European libraries in the original distribution of the questionnaire. This tendency is strengthened by the great differences in response rate: only 27, i.e. 11%, of the 237 responses came from Africa, Central and South America, and Asia. This did not come as a surprise: lack of storage space for new accessions may be viewed as a problem of affluence and is not likely to appear very urgent to libraries in developing countries.

Of the 200 libraries whose responses were analysed, 96% reported humanities and social sciences as being among their main areas of collection. The corresponding figures for other subject fields were as follows: natural sciences 87%, law 62%, technology 57%, medicine 51%, theology 42%, others 21%.

90% of the libraries studied have holdings exceeding 500,000 volumes. 62 institutions (31%) possess more than 2 million volumes.

140 libraries (70%) replied in the affirmative to Question 6: Is de-acquisition accepted by the library's governing body? 54 answers were negative, and 6 libraries did not answer this one at all. Among the libraries not allowed to de-acquire, no more than 6 foresee any change in this respect within the next few years. In a few cases of legal barriers the explanation is undoubtedly to be found in the fact that the library also functions as the national library or repository. In other instances libraries refer to general laws prohibiting the disposal in any way of state-purchased materials.

In 20 libraries de-acquisition is not only permitted but is actually enforced by the library's governing body. 10 of these libraries are to be found in socialist countries and 8 in North America.

When it comes to the extent of the de-acquisition actually performed, some 75% of the libraries allowed to de-acquire give figures indicating some activity of this kind during the past year. More surprisingly the same is true of no less than 10 of the libraries where de-acquisition is said not to be permitted. This might reflect some actual discrepancy between theory and practice. On the other hand there are some general indications in the replies to the questionnaire that libraries sometimes include weeding of duplicates in spite of the definition stated in the covering letter.

The same kind of apparent inconsistency occurs among the replies to Question 9: Does your library have an explicit or implicit policy of de-acquisition?, in that there were 5 positive answers from libraries not permitted to discard. Again, the policy in these cases might simply be to de-acquire nothing but duplicate or damaged items.

More interestingly, no less than 80 of the 140 libraries which are free to de-acquire admit that they have no policy governing such activities, not even an implicit one. 58 of these 80 libraries are among those which report some recent de-acquisition activity. Even though there may have been some uncertainty as to the proper definition of 'policy', these figures do seem to give some support to the hypothesis advanced in our covering letter, i.e. that de-acquisition "is more often than not being practised without any careful strategic planning but rather in the form of ad-hoc solutions and improvisational measures".

In Question 10 libraries were asked to indicate which of a number of factors affect decisions to de-acquire, selecting one of the following alternatives: always, very frequently, fairly frequently, rarely, never. The replies from libraries allowed to de-acquire are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Factors affecting decisions to de-acquire in the 140 libraries whose governing bodies accept de-acquisition (%)

	Always or very often	Fairly often	Rarely or never	No reply
Shortage of space	37	16	37	10
Optimum size of collection	6	9	63	22
Amount of recorded use	26	26	34	14
Physical condition of item	37	30	21	12
Imprint date	11	26	46	17
Replacement by microform copy	11	18	37	34
Change in scope of interest of mother institution	6	9	66	19
Transfer of subject responsibility to another library	4	8	70	18
Other local source of provision	2	11	66	21
Item available by interlibrary loan	4	7	68	21
Availability of national or regional repository	4	9	66	21
Others	10	6	3	81

It appears that shortage of space, physical condition of item, and amount of recorded use are the factors receiving the highest ranking. On the other hand factors such as trying to maintain an optimum size of collection, existence of some other local source of provision, availability through interlibrary lending from a national or regional repository or from another library, change in scope of interest of mother institution, and transfer of subject responsibility to another library appear to be of little or no importance in this context. Imprint date and replacement by microform constitute an intermediate group of occasionally occurring factors.

About half of the 140 libraries accepting discard report relegation to off-site storage with preserved ownership as being an alternative to de-acquisition. Among the libraries where de-acquisition is not accepted one might

have expected off-site storage to be even more frequent, but apparently this is not the case: only 1/3 of such libraries gave affirmative replies to this question.

The factors impeding or preventing de-acquisition are also best analysed separating these two categories of libraries (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3. Factors impeding de-acquisition in the 140 libraries whose governing bodies accept de-acquisition (%)

	Ranking				Marked but not ranked	No reply
	1	2	3-4	5-7		
Legal obstacles	7	1	3	22	4	63
Shortage of staff	31	12	10	5	11	31
Demand for completeness of collections	16	19	13	7	6	39
Opposition of academic staff	9	11	16	8	9	47
Alteration of library records difficult or impossible	4	9	18	13	8	48
Holdings recorded in union catalogues	2	4	13	21	4	56
National or regional responsibilities in collection development	4	6	26	12	8	44
Others	4	1	4	1	0	90

Where de-acquisition is accepted, shortage of staff, demand for completeness of collections, and opposition of academic staff (in that order) are mentioned as the three main factors. Among the 54 libraries where de-acquisition is not allowed the highest-ranking factor is - not unexpectedly - legal obstacles, followed by national or regional responsibilities in collection development, demand for completeness of collections, and opposition of academic staff. Some libraries provide further comments on this point at the end of the questionnaire (see below).

The most frequent ways of disposing of de-acquired material appear to be to donate it to other libraries or to destroy it, but sale and exchange are also fairly commonly used methods.

Only 20 libraries answered yes to Question 14: Are there any documents describing the policy and experience of your library with regard to de-acqui-

Table 4. Factors preventing de-acquisition in the 54 libraries whose governing bodies do not accept de-acquisition (%)

	Ranking				Marked but not ranked	No reply
	1	2	3-4	5-7		
Legal obstacles	18	4	4	11	15	48
Shortage of staff	8	9	13	7	9	54
Demand for completeness of collections	9	15	4	9	9	54
Opposition of academic staff	13	2	6	7	17	55
Alteration of library records difficult or impossible	0	0	22	6	6	66
Holdings recorded in union catalogues	0	0	22	9	8	61
National or regional responsibilities in collection development	13	13	4	11	9	50
Others	2	2	2	0	2	92

sition? Not all of them enclosed such documents or gave bibliographical references. (Some excuses: "Sorry, confidential minutes." - "... very elated, and not an accurate reflection of present policy.") On the other hand, two of the libraries giving negative replies did in fact submit documents.

Much of the material received in response to this question contains policy statements on relegation to storage. Actual discard is often restricted to duplicates and items in a physical condition beyond repair. The following is a typical statement: "It is our intention not knowingly to withdraw the last or only copy of any title." There are only very few cases (most of them from the United States) of comprehensive policies including systematic de-acquisition of other categories of library material as a natural counterpart of acquisition. As an outstanding example of an ambitious long-term strategy we should particularly like to mention the 1982 Collection Review Program of Stanford University Libraries, involving a 10-year review "to identify books appropriate for conservation/preservation, remote storage, transfer to Special Collections, and discard". Books will be clearly identified for action by means of slips inserted 1-2 years before action will be taken, giving users ample time to react.

Some other libraries which did submit detailed guidelines for de-acquisition were Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen, FRG, Linköping University Library, Sweden, University of Sussex Library, UK, Library of the University of California at Los Angeles, and University of Washington Libraries, Seattle, WA, USA.

The comments given under Question 15 (Please add any remarks or information ...) are often quite interesting and revealing, although not easily summarized. In this paper it will only be possible to mention some of the most frequently recurring themes.

It is quite clear from remarks made by a very large number of responding libraries that even if they may currently have sufficient stack space at their disposal to last for the next five or ten years, there is a growing awareness in many parts of the world that time is running out and that space problems had better be tackled by conscious and rational planning rather than by late improvisation carried out under pressure. The following quotation is rather characteristic:

> De-acquisition has tended always to be given the lowest priority in our management rankings ...; other projects and tasks have been more urgent, or were felt to be more creative/constructive. However, growth of the bookstock and the high cost of providing storage accommodation are forcing us to define a weeding/discarding policy more closely, and there is little doubt that this side of our operations will enjoy much greater attention in the near future than it has up to now.

There are, however, several libraries that voice arguments against accepting de-acquisition in principle, besides the one already mentioned of possible function as a last-resort repository. A UK library writes:

> Provided that accommodation is available for storage, de-acquisition seems to be a short-sighted policy, which may be convenient for the present, but only at the expense of the research needs of future scholars. Our experience suggests that it is impossible to predict with any degree of certainty what those needs are likely to be.

The same fundamental opinion is expressed by a US library:

> We feel that our status as a research library inhibits our disposal of any unique item with potential use.

A statement from Italy is even more categorical, using a technical argument:

> University libraries cannot de-acquire documents: everything is officially recorded and records cannot be changed.

Some libraries are anxious to point out that while the main library does no discarding, a considerable amount of de-acquisition may take place in branch and institute libraries.

Just as in the answers to Question 12, staff shortage and opposition from faculty are frequently cited as reasons for not undertaking de-acquisition, as in this sad story told by a British library:

> A few years ago library staff were stopped from 'de-acquiring' the lowest priority material from store, i.e. duplicates, old editions, old donations of school texts, which would have created space for shelving material weeded from open-access stacks. Academic staff objected on principle, even though the material was offered to BLLD (and declined). ... Even plans to weed stock (and retain ownership) to store were hedged about with ludicrously cost-ineffective constraints. Since then library staff numbers have been drastically reduced, and it would be very difficult to introduce any weeding or de-acquiring, however essential or desirable such a task might be.

A considerable number of comments stress the importance of discrimination in the acquisition process, particularly in the case of unsolicited gifts and exchange material. This is undoubtedly one of the most cost-effective methods of pruning library collections.

On the whole it can be said that surprisingly few responses explicitly mention cost as a major consideration (although of course the question of financial resources underlies the comments on shortage of staff and space). To conclude this study, may we cite a particularly labour-saving British method of disposing of unwanted material with little or no cash value: "Some such material is left on trolleys in the foyer; it very quickly disappears, even if not apparently 'appetising'."

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International Federation
of Library Associations and Institutions
Fédération Internationale des
Associations de Bibliothécaires et des Bibliothèques
Internationaler Verband
der bibliothekarischen Vereine und Institutionen
Международная Федерация
Библиотечных Ассоциаций и Учреждений

Section on Acquisition
and Exchange

IFLA

November 1983

IFLA STUDY ON DE-ACQUISITION

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a project under the IFLA Section on Acquisition and Exchange we have undertaken an international study of current policies and practices among research libraries with regard to *de-acquisition*. This concept is here defined as weeding or discarding library material which at some earlier date has been acquired and added to the collections of the library. Our study only includes procedures which result in the library no longer possessing the material being disposed of. We are *not* concerned with relegation to storage with retained ownership nor with the disposal of duplicate items from stock. The investigation is restricted to university libraries.

The study proceeds from the hypothesis that a number of factors, notably shortage of shelving space caused by the rising costs of building and storage, are increasingly forcing libraries to resort to de-acquisition, and that this is more often than not being practised without any careful strategic planning but rather in the form of ad-hoc solutions and improvisational measures.

Unfortunately it is quite impossible to collect the material necessary in order to test this hypothesis by any other means than a questionnaire such as the enclosed one. While being aware that filling in questionnaires is not likely to be a popular activity in any library, we trust that you will recognize the general interest of the topic under investigation and so will spare us the minutes it will take you to answer our questions. We should be grateful if you would kindly return the completed questionnaire not later than *31 January 1984* to the following address:

Mr. Paul Hallberg, Director
Göteborg University Library
P.O. Box 5096
S-402 22 Göteborg, Sweden

We thank you in advance for your valuable cooperation.

Sincerely,

Per Morten Bryhn
Head of Acquisitions
Oslo University Library, Norway

Paul Hallberg
Director
Göteborg University Library, Sweden

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PROBLEM OF DE-ACQUISITION

(1-3) 1. Name and address of replying library:

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(4-11) 2. Main areas of collection:

0 ☐ Humanities
1 ☐ Social sciences
2 ☐ Law
3 ☐ Theology
4 ☐ Natural sciences
5 ☐ Medicine
6 ☐ Technology
7 ☐ Other(s) (please specify):

.....

(12) 3. Legal status of library:

0 ☐ State-owned 1 ☐ Private 2 ☐ Other (please specify):

.....

(13) 4. Extent of holdings (number of volumes; for periodicals: annual volumes):

0 ☐ < 100,000
1 ☐ < 250,000
2 ☐ < 500,000
3 ☐ < 1,000,000
4 ☐ < 2,000,000
5 ☐ > 2,000,000

(14) 5. Gross annual growth of holdings (number of volumes; for periodicals: annual volumes):

0 ☐ < 5,000
1 ☐ < 10,000
2 ☐ < 25,000
3 ☐ < 50,000
4 ☐ < 100,000
5 ☐ > 100,000

(15-16) 6. Is de-acquisition (weeding, discarding) accepted by the library's governing body?

0 ☐ Yes 1 ☐ No

If no, do you foresee a change within the next few years? 1)

67 0 ☐ Yes 1 ☐ No

1) Further comments on this question may be given under 15 below.

(17) 7. Is de-acquisition enforced by the library's governing body?

0 ☐ Yes 1 ☐ No

(18-26) 8. Extent of de-acquisition last year or last fiscal year (number of volumes, nearest thousand):

Monographs: ..... Periodicals: ..... Total: .....

(27) 9. Does your library have an explicit or implicit policy of de-acquisition?

0 ☐ Yes 1 ☐ No

If yes, please describe briefly, or attach policy document

.....

.....

.....

(28-39) 10. Which are the factors affecting decisions to de-acquire an item in your library?

	Always 0	Very frequently 1	Fairly frequently 2	Rarely 3	Never 4
Shortage of space	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimum size of collection	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amount of recorded use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical condition of item	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Imprint date	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Replacement by microform copy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Change in scope of interest of mother institution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer of subject responsibility to another library	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other local source of provision	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Item available by interlibrary loan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Availability of national or regional repository (which takes over ownership of relegated material)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other(s) (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(41) 11. Is relegation to off-site storage with preserved ownership an alternative to de-acquisition in your library?

0 ☐ Yes 1 ☐ No

(42-49) 12. Which factors tend to obstruct a policy of de-acquisition in your library? (Please indicate ranking order of importance; 1 for the most important factor...)

0 ☐ Legal obstacles

1 ☐ Shortage of staff

2 ☐ Demand for completeness of collections

3 ☐ Opposition of academic staff

4 ☐ Alteration of library records difficult or impossible

5 ☐ Holdings recorded in national or regional union catalogues

6 ☐ National or regional responsibilities in collection development

7 ☐ Other(s) (please specify): .....

.....

(50-57) 13. How is de-acquired material handled in your library?

	Always 0	Very frequently 1	Fairly frequently 2	Rarely 3	Never 4
Thrown away or destroyed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used as exchange material	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Donated to other libraries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Automatic transfer to other libraries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer to another institution (which?) for further distribution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
.....					
Sold	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other method(s) (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
.....					
.....					

(58) 14. Are there any documents (published papers, reports, memoranda, etc.) describing the policy and experience of your library with regard to de-acquisition?

0☐ Yes 1☐ No

If yes, please attach copies of documents or bibliographical references.

(59) 15. Please add any remarks or information which you feel might be pertinent or useful in this context.

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Name and position of person answering this questionnaire:

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IFLA

1985

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Collaborative Collection Development: Progress, Problems, and Potential

by

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Andrew W. Mellon Director of The Research Libraries

The New York Public Library

New York, New York, U. S. A.

KEYWORD(S):

Collection Development

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Collaborative Collection Development: Progress, Problems, and Potential

by David H. Stam
The New York Public Library

Abstract: Several recent developments in collaborative approaches to collection development and resource sharing among research libraries in the United States may provide models for other organizations or countries in approaching the task of assuring adequate research resources with inadequate financial resources. The following paper describes one of those developments, the collection development work of the Research Libraries Group and its Conspectus, discusses some of the specific issues related to Conspectus development, and concludes with an outline of the benefits and by-products of the RLG approach to the distribution of collection development responsibilities.

I. Introduction: Library planning and collection building in the research libraries of the United States have long had to deal with two contradictory forces, autonomy and interdependence. The independence and autonomy of those libraries in providing for local self-sufficiency in information needs has been tested by a gradual but growing realization that local self-sufficiency is not possible for the programs of comprehensive university libraries or other large libraries. They continue to operate independently, making their own decisions for local needs, while routinely rejecting the "myth of the self-sufficient library" and paying lip-service to cooperation and resource sharing.

Some attempts to transcend these conflicting tensions by moving to the wider issue of assuring adequate national coverage of significant research resources have failed, foundered, or succeeded only partially. The Farmington Plan for distribution foundered for lack of careful monitoring of its implementation, though its importance for its time should not be underestimated. The Public Law 480 program, which used available foreign exchange funds for importing library materials from such countries as Egypt, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, attempted to aid the local

adequacy of many libraries, almost entirely in duplication of the Library of Congress. Although it successfully added to the research resources of the country, it was really a program of duplicative rather than distributed responsibility. So was the National Program of Acquisitions and Cataloging (NPAC) which provided priority cataloging of foreign acquisitions usually duplicated by Library of Congress and member participants in the program. Without doubt, our most successful cooperative program has been the Center for Research Libraries here in Chicago which has served the role of providing access to little-used resources which members preferred not to hold locally. These are just a few examples of American attempts at collaborative collection development here, but it is fair to say that none of them represents the true sharing of distributed collection responsibility that our rhetoric would suggest.

Since its founding in 1974 by four major research libraries (Harvard, Yale, Columbia, NYPL) in the Northeastern part of the United States, the Research Libraries Group (RLG) has had these issues at the top of its agenda. Even with its strong starting base of four of the largest libraries in the country, its primary assumption was simply that no single library could do all

it wanted to do and that collaborative programs had to be developed to address the major issues facing research libraries. That assumption operated for all its major programs including collection development, preservation, resource sharing, and bibliographical systems, and was also dominant in the work of subsidiary specialized programs of the consortium. Although all of those programs can be seen as interrelated, for example that collaborative collection development has direct implications for cooperation in preservation matters, the focus of this paper is mainly on the RLG collection development program itself.

II. Collection Management and Development in RLG:

At the outset, from 1974 to 1978, the efforts of the founding members of RLG were devoted to three main areas: 1) the geographical distribution of collecting responsibilities, in which the members "divided the globe" and agreed mutually to take responsibility for particular countries; 2) collaboration in deciding who would purchase expensive sets to which all required some access; 3) agreement on a "master copy" concept for journals, whereby one member would agree to maintain a given title available to all, so that other members might discontinue it as they chose. I should stress that all actions were entirely voluntary, thereby recognizing the

continued autonomy of each institution. The only coercion came from internal economic forces which required difficult choices to reduce the rate of growth in acquisitions and other budgets.

The experience of the four founding members with these programs proved extremely valuable in setting the context of discussion and showing possible pitfalls of such collaboration. The withdrawal of Harvard University from the group in 1978, for example, clearly undermined the continued application of the "master copy" concept and raised the question of what should happen when the voluntary agreements are abrogated. The lack of a bibliographical system and its communication capabilities were an added problem. In addition, the initial experience of implementing these programs with manual files proved enormously onerous and illustrated the need for automated facilities to control the information about these programs.

With the withdrawal of Harvard, and the selection of Stanford University's automated bibliographical system as the basis of RLG system development for bibliographical control, the stage was set for the expansion of RLG to other universities and libraries nationwide, and for expanded approaches to the collection development problem. From its original nucleus of four members, RLG grew by 1982 to twenty-six members, all actively engaged in collaborative collection development activities.

Today the work has expanded beyond the RLG membership (now at 31 research libraries) to the National Collection Inventory Project (NCIP), sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries, and the work of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries.

What has been the approach of the RLG Collection Management and Development Committee? When the Committee began its work in 1979, chaired by myself with Paul Mosher of Stanford University as Vice-Chairman, its aims were both modest and ambitious. On the modest side, we merely wanted to understand more fully what actually was going on in collection development in our then limited membership,in order to get a better picture of what we were actually doing. More ambitiously, we were asked to succeed, where many had previously fallen short, in creating a system and climate to assure our collective capacity to support the nation's research needs. The tool developed to meet these objectives was the RLG Conspectus.(1)

In brief, the Conspectus was designed by the Committee as a collection assessment instrument to aid coordinated collecting activities. It attempts to present a composite picture of collection strengths and current collection practices in participating libraries. To provide this picture, the Conspectus is arranged by Library of Congress subject fields (now numbering over

5000 subdivisions) for which each library provides an assessment of its own collection strength in each of these subdivisions, using a carefully defined range of numerical designators from 0 to 5. These levels are: 0) Out of scope; 1) Minimal Level; 2) Basic Information Level; 3) Instructional Support Level; 4) Research Level; and 5) Comprehensive Level. In addition, for each subject the library provides a second number to describe the current collecting intensity, and a language designator to describe the language coverage of the subject collection. The language code letters are: E: English; F: selected foreign language material plus English; W: wide selection of languages in all applicable languages; and Y: material in only one language. One example would be a 2E/4 W collection in computer science, indicating that an institution is attempting to move from a basic information collection, entirely in English, to a research level collection in a wide variety of languages. Another example would be a 4/3 F collection in anthropology, signifying that the institution is deemphasizing its collecting in that field. A 4/4 Y research level collection of Ukrainian literature would include works only in Ukrainian. Finally, to illustrate further, a 5/5 E collection in German linguistics would be impossible, since a comprehensive collection level would require works in all applicable languages.

The compilation of these data for all contributing libraries provides the composite map which shows the various collection strengths and collecting policies for a given subject among the members. With that information we can determine whether there are adequate research resources within the consortium for that subject, whether there are endangered or neglected areas of concern to scholarship, and whether any member is willing to assume "primary collecting responsibility" (PCR) for the subject. Thus far, 315 primary collecting responsibilities have been assigned and accepted by member libraries, admittedly a relatively small number and often in narrow subject fields. These assignments have built on existing strengths in the consortium and in most cases required only the assurance that the member would maintain its present commitment to that field.

In order to test the validity of the assumptions and the data of the Conspectus, the Committee has engaged in a number of verification and overlap studies in such diverse fields as Russian literature, Swiss history, agricultural economics, art and architecture, and Biblical literature. These studies have been helpful in improving the accuracy of reporting for the Conspectus, but in the vast majority of cases have confirmed the original estimates made by the members about their collections. They have also illustrated in a concrete way not only the overlap and duplication among

collections, but also the ways in which collections supplement each other to reach desired levels of research coverage.

As the data began to accumulate from the expanding membership and as more and more subject sections of the conspectus were developed, it became clear that the manual manipulation of the data would soon become very unwieldy, if not impossible. Thus, in 1980 we began work to program the RLG Conspectus Online, now a successful interactive data base which can be searched by subject, classification, collection level, or institution. It is mounted as a special data base within the Research Library Information Network (RLIN), and can best be regarded as the macro-bibliographic guide to the RLIN database (now containing over 14 million records). Stated differently, the Conspectus is the guide map to the individual bibliographical records in the RLIN database, as well as to member holdings not yet included in the database. As massive retrospective conversion projects proceed, extending the coverage of the RLIN database, the link between the map and the database will become closer.

The work on the Conspectus has now covered all Library of Congress subject categories except A (general) and U and V (military and naval science), and has been completed in most of its parts by about 25 RLG members plus the Library of Congress. Three university libraries

in Indiana (Indiana University, Notre Dame University, and Purdue University) have also completed certain segments of the Conspectus, and their data have been added to the online version as an initial step in the National Collection Inventory Project.

One clear drawback of the original RLG attempt to create a composite picture of national collections and collecting practices was the fact that RLG membership did not include many of the most important library collections in the country. Even today its membership comprises only 31 of the 117 members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Concurrent with RLG efforts, that Association in 1980 also recognized the need to identify collection strengths nationally, and began to seek a way to realize that goal. It saw the desirability of building on existing work and in 1981 undertook a test of the Conspectus methodology in five non-RLG members (including one Canadian research library). The test clearly illustrated some of the same problems that RLG participants had encountered, but showed sufficient promise for the ARL to adopt the methodology as its national program, thus bridging the gap between RLG and other research libraries.

The second phase of ARL's work was the Indiana application noted above, all three participants being non-RLG libraries. That phase also included the preparation and publication of a Manual for the North

American Inventory of Research Library Collections, published in January 1985, essentially a guide to Conspectus development for participating libraries. The Manual answered a long-felt need of RLG members and represents a model of inter-organizational cooperation, aided of course by funding from outside sources. A third phase of NCIP expansion has just been funded to aid further participation in the project by up to 60 libraries. In addition, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries is undertaking its own Conspectus development, including the difficult task of preparing a French version of the tool and its worksheets (i.e. the reporting forms for Conspectus data). Other regional applications in the southeastern United States, in California, in the Pacific northwest, and even in Alaska, are proceeding apace. European library colleagues have also expressed interest in the approach and are watching our progress and problems with an appropriate critical detachment.

III. Issues and Problems Related to Conspectus Development:

With all of the surprising and growing interest in this admittedly immature and evolving instrument, it would be well to share with you some of the difficulties we have encountered in attempting to develop a uniform (or at least unified) approach to national collection development.

1. Subjectivity and Quantification: From what I have said already, it should be obvious that the Conspectus data is an accumulation of thousands of subjective assessments by a diverse group of individuals (primarily selection officers), with a diversity of background and experience. The collections being described were often organized on varying principles of classification which could make comparison difficult and overemphasize or conceal strengths and weaknesses. To reduce the subjective element, some of our members argued for use of a shelflist measurement for each subject division to provide a precise count of the number of titles in that area. Others contended that a shelflist count would provide a measure of relative size, but could not indicate the strengths, quality, or cohesiveness of a given collection; in fact, it would represent the sum total of subjective judgments which went into the building of that subject collection.

The issue has not and probably cannot be fully resolved. Verification studies have helped to confirm or modify some Conspectus data. Current work of the RLG Task Force on Conspectus Analysis, a subcommittee which is charged with analysis of the data and which has overseen the distribution of primary collecting responsibilities (PCRs), has been devoted to the development of benchmarks, or broad quantitative standards, for determining levels of strength in given

areas. For example, a 4-level collection in the medical conspectus calls for "an extensive collection of periodicals, including at least 65 percent of the titles pertinent to the subject in the List of Journals Indexed in Index Medicus," while a 3-level collection would call for only 25 percent of the English titles listed there. A comprehensive collection in entomology would require 95 percent of the journals covered by Entomology Abstracts. Such guidelines are still being developed and we believe will be helpful in substantiating conspectus assessments, but frankly they are unlikely to remove all doubts about the quality of conspectus information. I would merely emphasize that the tool is intended not as a precise representation but rather as a descriptive map.

2. Arrangement: The choice of Library of Congress classification as the organizing principle for the Conspectus did not come easily. In some areas there seemed to be excessive detail requiring such fine distinctions as to be meaningless. In others, especially in recently developing fields, such as computer science, there were insufficient subcategories. Some members felt that in the latter case, the data could not truly represent their real strengths in various subfields. Furthermore, not all of our libraries use the Library of Congress classification system (including The New York

Public Library which, like many European libraries, classifies its books by size). Many libraries have split collections with more recent books in LC classification, with older collections in Dewey Decimal classification or other schemes. Obviously the assessments for each library had to incorporate both elements of those split collections or translate the Dewey or other sections into the LC arrangement.

In the end we made a pragmatic decision to remain with Library of Congress classification throughout the Conspectus. It is the most widely recognized standard nationally, especially among the research libraries in RLG and ARL. To compensate for the deficiencies noted, we have encouraged participants to add to individual sections special "scope notes," revealing special characteristics of their collections which the LC arrangement might conceal. Nonetheless, I suspect there will always be individual specialists approaching the Conspectus and finding it wanting in the detail they desire.

Curiously, one of our first debates was over how many subject divisions would be necessary to provide the broad picture we wanted to achieve. The estimate in 1980 was 1500 to 2000. We now show over 5800 categories in the Conspectus and it continues to grow. Even with that large a number, the representation of specialized rare book and manuscript collections in the Conspectus is still far from adequate.

3. Area Studies: Allied to these questions was the desire of area studies librarians, those engaged in providing research resources concerning specific geographical regions such as East Asia, Africa, or Latin America, to create their own separate Conspectus to cover the whole universe of knowledge as applied in their own particular regions. How, for example, does the topic of the Shinto religion in Japan, relate to Shintoism in the Religion section of the Conspectus? What has emerged is a "two-track" configuration which allows the major area studies collections, embracing all classes of knowledge, to convey their data individually. At the same time, the indexing of the Conspectus online is able to retrieve all relevant data on a given search from the entire Conspectus. Inconsistencies do occur and the two-track system is far from perfect.

4. Format Collections: Another problem we encountered was the question of how to incorporate collections which were mainly determined by format rather than subject. Microform collections tend to reflect general collecting patterns, and maps usually involve geography and cartography, but other formats present unique problems. Government documents, recorded sound archives, manuscript and archival sections tend to be separately administered parts of our collections, unrelated to Library of Congress classification, and yet covering a myriad of subject fields. Sometimes this separation can aid cooperative planning, as in the RLG program which

has distributed cataloging responsibility for sound recordings by record company label. In other instances, both description and planning are more difficult. For example, subject disciplines which are mainly supported by journal and serial publications are much more difficult to evaluate and describe than are monograph collections. Distribution of responsibilities in these fields, mainly in scientific disciplines, is also more problematical. Again, scope-notes and cross references can help but the problems are not yet resolved and work on them continues.

5. Language Codes: Agreement on and use of the language codes, simple as they seem, has also presented difficulties for conspectus constructors. In the early stages of our work they were used sporadically and inconsistently, even though their value in distinguishing collection strength was commonly agreed upon. Moreover, the language code is normally only attached to the current collecting intensity, even though it is sometimes unclear whether it describes the collection strength as well. This is an element of the Conspectus which clearly needs further work and upgrading of the data to achieve greater consistency.

As interest in the Conspectus spreads, the issue of language codes will become more crucial, since the Anglophonic orientation will have to shift if the methodology is to be applied in other nations and

language cultures. We understand that the Canadian Association of Research Libraries has begun a translation into French of the Conspectus and its worksheets, and we hope to learn a great deal from their experience with that project.

6. Current Collecting Intensity: For any given participant in the Conspectus, the sum total of all of its claims of current collecting intensity (CCI's) constitutes its de facto collection development policy. The question here is whether those claims are the desire (i.e. goals) of the Library, or are, in fact, the actuality. Without a great deal of ongoing analysis in each separate area it is difficult to assess these claims and we are again dependent upon ultimately subjective and impressionistic criteria. The RLIN system is capable of generating management information from acquisitions and cataloging transactions which could help in this respect, but most of us have not been in a position to take full advantage of those possibilities. The true test will eventually be the level of user satisfaction of those who will use the distributed resources of the consortium as represented in the Conspectus.

7. Logistics: Obviously, the work which has already gone into the Conspectus represents a substantial investment of time and effort, and indirectly of money. The costs are not easily quantifiable, the process involves

part-time work of most of the participants, extensive meetings and training sessions are often involved, and a great amount of paper work is generated before the data reach the online database. Questions therefore persist as to whether all this effort is worth it. I hope to provide some of the answer to that question in the conclusion of the paper, but at this point I would only note that most of that work, the analysis of the institutional collection development policies, involves not a new responsibility but a new element of traditional duties, engaging our bibliographers and selection officers in a realignment of duties with few additional costs. I should also note that the costs at RLG headquarters of programming the online Conspectus, of staff input of the data, and of program adminstration have been minimal and covered largely by external funding.

Further work is required for refinement and expansion of the online Conspectus. Some reprogramming is needed to make the tool more user-friendly. We all agree that its present access and search strategies are somewhat unwieldy and cumbersome. We also need to develop transportable software for application of the methodology elsewhere. There are apparent limits to growth and effectiveness and we believe it may prove

advantageous to mount other regional or national databases, such as the Canadian or California efforts, separately.

There is a further question of whether the eventual national Conspectus should include all collection data or be confined to research and comprehensive level (4's and 5's) collections. That issue also awaits resolution as we gain more experience with this evolving tool.

8. Local Political Considerations: Given the tensions of independence and interdependence emphasized at the outset of this paper, one must note that the Conspectus has been seen by some as a threat to the independent growth of collections. There are some fears that it will create restraints on individual collecting activities within participating institutions. Teaching faculty and researchers in universities may not wish to see primary responsibility in their areas of expertise assigned to other institutions, and may exert great pressure to avoid any reductions in collecting in their fields. Subject specialists and selection officers may not want to desist from their efforts to build competing collections. Although we have consistently emphasized that assignments of primary collecting responsibility (PCR) were not intended to inhibit or end collecting elsewhere, in fact, that continued collecting in other institutions was essential in achieving strong national coverage, these fears persist and are unlikely to disappear, indeed may become more widespread as the program develops.

9. Related Issues: All of the foregoing deals directly with collection development practices and expanded approaches to them in a collaborative environment. Changing our collective behavior in collection development will, however, have wider implications for all library operations and raise related issues:

A. Document Delivery: In order to assure the widest possible access to research resources, especially when those resources are widely scattered, improvement in our document delivery system is required. Recently, the National Endowment for the Humanities, a U.S. Federal agency supporting research in the Humanities, has inaugurated a program to help scholars go to collections by providing small travel grants for specific research projects. Nonetheless, distribution of collections and collecting responsibilities still implies the need for rapid remote access. We believe that eventually electronic information transfer will answer part of this need in some areas of current research. The RLG Shared Resources Program, in effect a priority interlibrary loan system, has placed a premium on rapid "turn-around" time in document delivery, by giving priority to member requests, but much remains to be done.

Especially important are rare and less commonly held materials which owners may not wish to lend, whether because of value, security, fragility, or local need. In that case surrogates or alternate copies are required but often take an unacceptable length of time to prepare. This is a key question of resource sharing and crucial for Universal Access to Publications (UAP).

B. Preservation: While the distribution of responsibilities in collecting can also be complemented by distribution of responsibilities in preservation, distribution may also threaten rather than enhance the survival of materials. The concentration of use on a given collection, when the number of duplicative collections elsewhere is diminishing, would take its toll on those collections. Here we have to rely on the responsible collections to develop surrogate collections, for now primarily as master microfilms, from which working copies can be provided to users elsewhere. One thing is very clear: the preservation problem in this country, with our 140-year history of bad paper and overheated libraries, is too big for any one library to address and there is no alternative to collaborative approaches. In fact, we believe it too great a problem for any one nation to handle and that international programs are required. In recent years we have seen some encouraging signs that movement in that direction can occur.

C. Bibliographical Control and Communication: In essence, a system of bibliographical control is a device for communicating information about collections. The RLIN database conveys information about specific holdings, additions, and changes. The Conspectus is also a communication tool which not only describes collection strengths and policies but enables members to convey changes in those policies as the individual (and autonomous) members make those changes. Current development of the Linked System Project, designed to allow different systems to communicate with one another, is another building block toward a truly national program of shared scholarly resources, a program which we again hope can spread beyond the boundaries of this country, improving document delivery and eventually taking advantage of the potentials of full-text transmission.

D. Other problems of cooperation, nationally and internationally, are well-known to all of you and can be mentioned briefly. Language differences, the lack of agreed-upon standards, the speed of technological growth, the costs of cooperation and the relative low level of library funding, problems of copyright, and the concomitant tendency toward charging fees for information-- all are impediments to universal access to

Conspectus data, though there is no doubt that mutual reliance has increased. "The reality," as Scott Bennett, one of our Committee members, has recently said, "is that librarians are pursuing cooperative collection management (just as they have pursued automation) not to reduce costs but to improve services."(2)

Let me conclude with a brief description of some of the results of our work which have helped improve services, while providing a framework for the collaborative resource development which we seek. First, the Conspectus is an important reference tool, supplementing the RLIN database enabling librarians to identify strong collections and likely locations for their users. The inclusion of NCIP participants, and others, will create the map of North American research collection strengths which we need for both collection development and public service referral purposes.

The engagement of hundreds of bibliographers and selection officers in the process of Conspectus building has been helpful in better understanding of their own collections and policies, and in greater awareness of supporting collections elsewhere. For many of our members, it has provided a collection development policy

(the aggregate of all the institution's Conspectus data), where none existed previously. Collectively, it has identified and addressed dozens of neglected and endangered areas of research not adequately covered by the member libraries.

The Conspectus has also provided a framework and capacity to relate collection development strengths to shared cataloging, retrospective conversion, and preservation needs, and to serve as a basis for cooperative cataloging and national preservation planning.

For Universities, the Conspectus has been used to enhance the Library's role in institutional planning processes by providing better information on collections as they relate to changing academic programs. It has also helped establish a process to involve faculty more closely in collection development, while serving faculty more effectively by improved access to materials located elsewhere. It also identifies local deficiencies which have to be addressed locally, thus demonstrating to administrative officers the need for additional support, as well as suggesting fundraising opportunities.

Perhaps most importantly, the Conspectus constitutes an insurance policy against reduced budgets, the framework for redistribution of our own financial resources, and the groundwork for wide access. It is no panacea for budget woes. Richard DeGennaro expressed the issue recently in these words:

> We must husband [our] existing resources and increase them in the future. It would be a tragedy if those who fund our libraries were to misunderstand the purpose of resource sharing and use it as a rationale for further reducing library appropriations. Resource sharing will permit us to do more with less by pooling our resources, but only if we keep the pool replenished.(3)

(1) For a history and description of the Conspectus, see Nancy E. Gwinn and Paul H. Mosher, "Coordinating Collection Development: The RLG Conspectus," College & Research Libraries, March 1983. A manual on use of the Conspectus for the National Collection Inventory Project has been prepared by Jutta Scott-Reed and published in January 1985 by the Association of Research Libraries, Washington, D. C.

(2) Scott Bennett, "Current Initiatives and Issues in Collection Management," Journal of Academic Librarianship, Vol. 10, no. 5, pp. 257 - 261.

(3) "Resource Sharing in a Network Environment," Library Journal 105 (1980) p. 355.